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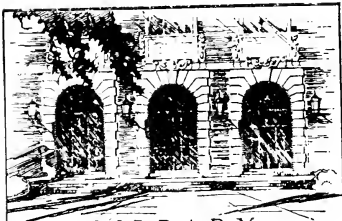
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JANE DE DUNSTANVILLE;

OR,

Characters as they are.

A NOVEL.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

BY ISABELLA KELLY,

AUTHOR OF MADELINE, ABBEY ST. ASAPH, AVONDALE PRIORY,
JOSCELINA, EVA, RUTHINGLENNE, MODERN INCIDENT,
BARON'S DAUGHTER, SECRET, LITERARY INFORMATION,
FRENCH GRAMMAR, POEMS, &c. &c.

VOL. III.

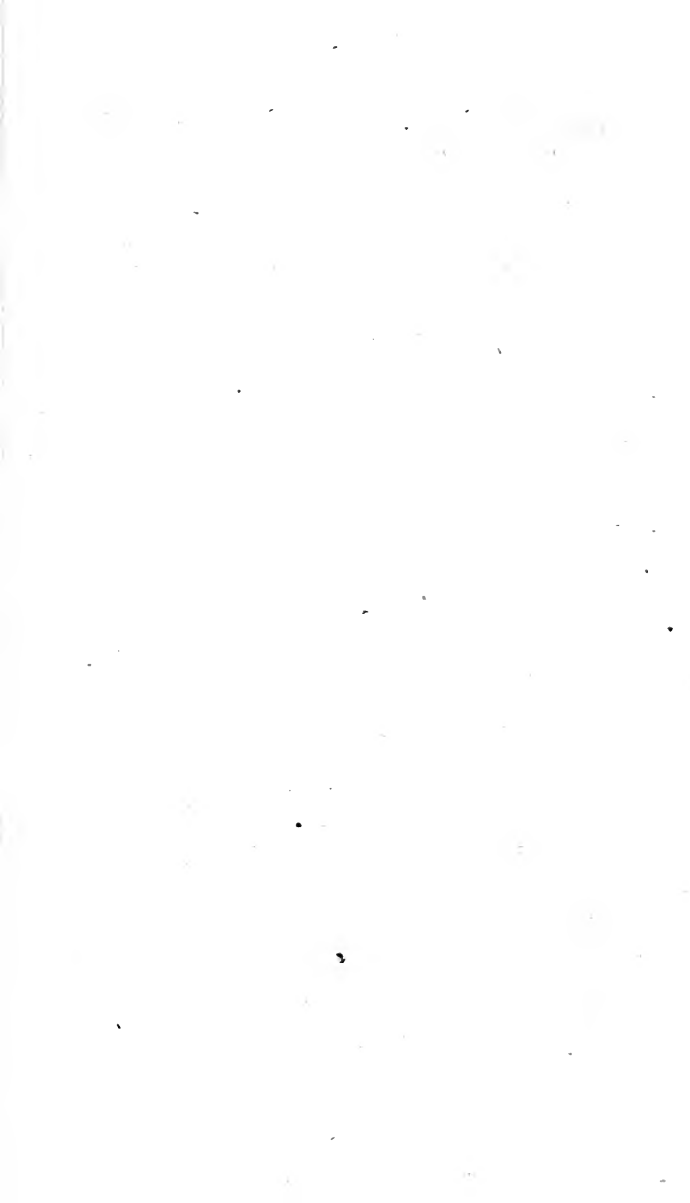
"I do not make heads, I only make caps."

LONDON:

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1813.



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JANE DE DUNSTANVILLE.

CHAPTER I.

LADY Clancarron having often heard Jane declare it as her opinion, that it was incumbent on every gentleman, however elevated his rank and fortune, to be active and useful in some way or other to his country, and even hinted a regret that Lord Clancarron wasted his life and possessions in the frivolities of fashion, the prudent mother, without consulting the peer, though with Jane she entirely gave him the credit of the determination, took very active measures to procure

him a commission in the guards. She had desired her son, as a preliminary step to her favour, if possible to obtain even a tacit consent, for to receive it either as a request or desire, even her most sanguine hopes could not seek.

Lady Clancarron, her son and daughter, accompanied by Don Diego D'Almeyda, who had become *en famille* at Clancarron house, were to dine in Portman-square with Jane, after which all were to attend a school ball in the evening.

Tutored by mamma as to his conversation and behaviour, his Lordship set out to attend her at a very early hour, and fortunately not only found her at home, but alone, netting a purse.

"You look a divinity to day, strike me dumb, Miss De Dunstanville."

"Divinities always inspire," she replied,

laughing; “do not let *me* rob you of your faculties, Lord Clancarron; but where are all your four-footed favourites! how came I honoured with so early, so unexpected a visit?”

“And unwished; split me, but I think so.”

“What a terrible satire, either on my judgment or your merit.”

By all that’s ecstatic, if you will allow my merit pretensions, your judgment shall decide every thing; I will turn Jew, Turk, Mahometan; aye, paralyze me! Quaker, Methodist, any thing to please you; Soldier, Senator, Lawyer, any or altogether.”

“Your indifference to the whole, I fear, will never lead you to excel in any; yet the pursuits of either would be respectable, and better establish a character,

than the frivolities in which your life is wasted."

"By your beautiful self you petrify me; do not I lead the life of a man of fashion?"

"Yes, and therefore unlike a man of sense; and to be candid, it is so unprofitably passed, so idly, so poorly, I had almost added so pitifully, that—

"Unprofitably!" his Lordship interrupted, dwelling on the first accusation, "strike me speechless! would you transform me into a dealer, a retail dealer who calculates on profit and loss?"

"Umph," said Jane with some point, "and if you did give a glance sometimes even at that plebeian consideration, it might not be amiss, and perchance might remind you, these same dealers too often

traffic more in loss than in profit among you dashers of the mode."

That string jarred; it vibrated too often in the halls of the Clancarron family.

"The law," resumed his Lordship, willingly dismissing a subject which rather embarrassed him; "do you approve of the law, my fair cousin?"

"Every nobleman should be acquainted with the laws of his country," said Jane; "as to its practice—"

"Its practice?" he repeated, as a question.

"It requires great properties, and long study, my Lord."

"What may these properties be, Miss De Dunstanville?"

"A good heart, a sound judgment, a clear head."

“ Analyze me, for a lord of law ; first now, a good heart.”

“ You feed your horses when they are hungry ! physic you dogs when they are sick.”

His Lordship bowed ;—“ That’s prime, petrify me ;—next a sound judgment.”

“ Capital judge of horse-flesh ; know blood by the prance ; never out at taking the odds ; gained the sweepstakes from Coventry’s Mustapha, beat Falcon’s Rozi-nante all hollow.”

“ Admirable quizzer !” cried his Lordship, with just sense enough to feel her satire, and with a smile which did not indicate him quite pleased with the quizzing, “ Now for the clear head—split me ! now for the clear head.”

“ Every body can see through it ;” and Jane, irresistibly impelled, burst into

a most provoking laugh, not to be mistaken.

“ Petrify my heart strings, madam, but all this is cursedly ridiculous ;” cried the Peer rising ;—“ strike me ugly, Miss De Dunstanville.”

“ I can’t, I can’t do that ;” said Jane, playing with her quizzing glass, and laughing louder than before.

“ Can this be pardoned !” ejaculated he, well understanding her implication ; “ pardoned in a country hottentot, without either fire or spirit ? no, but in twenty thousand a year ; yes, yes, split me,” and Lord Clancarron re-seated himself, and vowed he felt delighted with her wit and mirth ; it was really prime, bang up to the mark, and though at his own expense, positively delectable.

“ Oh ! my Lord, forgive the trespass

on your patience, and as your stock seems to be but small, and as it appears we cannot bustle through one, had we not better leave the rest of the professions for the study of those plebeian bodies who may have hearts to feel, and redress the sorrows of their fellow beings ; who will exert their judgment to discriminate, and have heads to decide ?”

Here Lady Clancarron entered in high spirits, and apparent good humour. “ My dear Miss De Dunstanville, my dear child,” she cried, “ I am so agitated, Clancarron it is obtained, I have obtained your cornetcy in the guards ; see how elegantly, how politely his Royal Highness writes ;—the troops will embark within a week ; all our measures must be prompt now ; dearest Jane you understand me ;—Clancarron, you will return a hero, and your charm-

ing cousin welcome the conqueror whom her beauty inspired to conquer."

"Petrify my heart strings, but I will be prompt," cried the peer, starting up; I am beset, trepanned, cajoled; but split me if I go to Portugal; yes, split me if I go, that's all;" and exit the valiant Lord Clancarron in a rage.

"Miss Dunstanville, my dearest child, is he distracted? what does this mean?" and her Ladyship was really surprised, if not shocked; "he is out of his wits!—what can it mean?—"

"Oh, do not you be frightened about his wits, madam; it only means that were it not for those ugly, vile, noisy guns, Clancarron might be a soldier."

"Would you infer that Lord Clancarron is a coward?"

"If the precaution to keep out of

the way of bullets, bombs, and broken bones be cowardice, what is to be inferred.

“ Miss De Dunstanville,” cried her Ladyship, maternal pride usurping even crafty caution for the moment, “ indeed, your wit is too severe ; were it possible, my poor fellow would take as many forms as Proteus to please you ; he adores you, and you affect to despise him.”

“ Madam,” said Jane calmly, “ I never aspired to his preference ; I neither could descend to be the Lady of a stable, nor the Mistress of a dog kennel ; to be the rival of an opera figurante in a husband’s heart, or the neglected and pitied wife of an abandoned home. If I have tried to alienate his Lordship from the destructive follies, and degrading vices, to which he evinces such attachment, it was to render him less ridiculous as a man, and less des-

picable as a relation; it was with a view, Lady Clancarron, to make him more rational in the sight of a surveying world, and more estimable in the sight of an all-judging God; but the man I marry, must have judgment to direct, guide, and govern, as well as love me; a man who feels willing obedience is a woman's duty, and who, with sense, generosity, and manly tenderness, will assert his privilege. Jane De Dunstanville must look up with reverence, it would break her heart to look down with pity on the man she had sworn to honor and obey."

Lady Clancarron remained silent; her lips could offer nothing that Jane's clear perception of things would have accepted, but her mind was far from inactive, it was busy in its own secret premeditations, and Mrs. Moreland entering with her

daughters, gave the conversation a different turn.

His Lordship re-appeared at the dinner hour, but so crest-fallen, humble, and silent was his looks, that Jane, with all her love of laughter, and contempt for his pretensions, could not help feeling pity for his condition, and never had she paid him such marked attention as on this evening; and when setting out for the festive scene of innocent recreation and pride, if possible, to set his tongue a going, she said, if her eyes would not be in danger for monopolizing a titled beau, where such brilliances were seldom seen, she would secure his hand for the first dances, as she felt quite in a dancing humour.

Lady Benvolia, who ever delighted in raising the dejected spirit, and soothing the broken in heart, patronized the school

where the ball was given ; it belonged to a woman of family and education, whose life had been only distinguished by the darker vicissitudes of human calamity. She had purchased this Seminary as a full and flourishing establishment, and on its reputation had depended for support and success, till her own connections could assist her.

Her predecessor had been patronized by the most immaculate of characters, Mr. Rupert Brierton ; he was the son of a family distinguished for charity, loving-kindness, and beneficence ; and the eye of the world looked up to this son as the bright representative of undegenerate worth ; most worthily he fills some of the highest, most important and most sacred offices ; he sits in the senate ; how just and incorruptible he sits ! his voice

bears weight in the great depositaries of national wealth, and he is ever ready to serve his country, he is a strict and severe presbyterian, calm in his tempers, and moderate in his pleasures ; he can controul his wishes, he can regulate his passions ; he is, moreover, of the rigid order for suppressing vice, would start from sin, and shrink from impurity. Mr. Rupert Brierton is a husband, a fond, faithful, unerring husband, to the best of women ; and thus supereminently graced with awful goodness, among the great and good ones of the land, he sits, and proud in his superior virtues, he feels no human imperfection, he knows no human infirmity, he acknowledges no human weakness ; awfully he sits above temptation, and impenetrable to guilt ; his pure eye looked on while the widow, virtuously struggling

to support her infant family, purchased, at no small hazard, this establishment; from the correct and upright friend he had so long patronized; what then had the widow to fear? what then could the orphan dread?

High in hope and expectation they took possession of their home, and beneath so benign an influence, felt a conscious serene security.

The widow's too fascinating predecessor, had appropriated a suit of rooms to her own peculiar purposes; this *sanctum sanc-turum* was prohibited ground to the whole innocent community, and one hapless day, a more hapless member of the fair and youthful order, had, with unhallowed and presumptuous foot profaned the prohibited precincts, when hearing the tripping steps of Mademoiselle La Superieur approaching,

and apprehensive of some severe penance being inflicted for disobedience, the fair delinquent had just time to conceal herself under a huge sofa, the valence of which completely shrouded her from observation, when,—enter the lady, accompanied by the invulnerably virtuous Mr. Rupert Brierton.

Have not the *friends*, friends of impregnable virtue, and saintly purity, their meetings of love, their feasts of love, their kisses of love? Certainly; nothing surer; but what has all that to do with Mr. Rupert Brierton, and his fair friend entering where *perdu* lay the damsel?

Oh, nothing, only they did enter, and the said damsel, though she had innocence and simplicity, was neither stupid nor ignorant; neither is taciturnity, if it be a virtue, the virtue of a school girl. The

young ladies were all withdrawn, with the exception of two or three, whose parents were remote, or who were too young to understand.

A scene of premeditated and complicated deception was unveiled ; but, alas ! the discovery came too late for the intervention of human effort to counteract.

A few short weeks after, the widow's predecessor went to her last account ; let her ashes rest undisturbed ; her eternal reckoning was made with the great one whose mercy tempers justice.

On an interview with Mr. Rupert Brierton, something was commuted, something conceded of the fatal bargain ; but alas ! of no importance, for the baneful influence had diffused itself with envenomed subtlety, and in time far off was felt in the very soul, yet the widow's sor-

row was unpitied, and her prayer rejected and despised by

Him, too, “ who pleads the widow’s and the orphan’s cause,

With seeming pity, and with self applause ;

Whose lips the law of charity can teach,

And love, and friendship, most devoutly preach,

Pleads, pities, preaches, censures, weeps, and sighs,

Yet is no saint, but Satan in disguise,

A man like this within his heart provides,

A fitting corner where the fiend resides.

When to this saint some wretch presents a suit,

Out starts the fiend, and strikes the suppliant mute.”

The evening was passed most agreeably ; propriety and pleasure presided, and innocence and gaiety went hand in hand ; Jane danced the two first dances with Lord Clancarron, and then with that condescending sweetness which gave such irresistible charms to her manner, she devoted herself to the lady of the mansion, and her pretty fairy train ;—two little interest-

ing creatures from India, particularly attracted her attention.

“ They had nobody,” they said, “ but their dear dear mother,” (so they called their governess) “ and their kind uncle, and we need nobody else,” added the enchanting child, “ for they are every thing, and every body to us.”

Sweet Marian, accept the sigh of affection now rising at the remembrance of thy beloved name ; never forget thy friend far off, and also remind thy excellent uncle, general De Meuron, that her heart will ever offer his virtues, the tribute of reverence, and cherish his blessing with the unforgotten tear he dropped upon her hand at parting.

Lady Florence had neither eyes nor ears, except for her foreign favourite Don

Diego ; they did not dance, but apparently abstracted from the company, devoted the hours to each other in secret conversation.

CHAPTER XV.

DON Diego D'Almeyda, was reputed to be a nobleman of vast power, and immense possessions, in his own country ; but as he had become the avowed and accepted lover of Lady Florence Clancarron, on their nuptials he had promised and engaged to dispose of all his alienable property and settle in England.

This personage was of majestic stature, with strong, dark, expressive features ; his eye large, penetrating, and full of subtle fire ; his look altogether severe, and his manners haughty, sullen, reserved and forbidding ; he seemed to possess a depth of

art, and sternness of resolution, in any conceived design, which very few would be able to counteract or subdue.

The kindly and candid soul of our heroine recoiled from his approach, and he never addressed her, but a chilling sensation seemed to freeze her blood, as if a warning to retreat from such ungenial influence.

Often she surprised his fixed eye upon her face, with a meaning wild, dark and strange; and when the ambiguous stare was detected, he would cautiously withdraw it, wrap its import in mysterious gloom, and sink into dumb abstraction; but innocence is ever fearless, the upright mind unapprehensive, and Jane, removed from his repellant presence, never thought more of him, his gloomy looks or dark meanings.

Jane had never passed a more innocently festive evening than at this school ball, and some days after, when speaking of the pleasure she had enjoyed, sportively declared, only it would distress some hearts, she should be tempted to steal away the enchanting Marian, whose naive manners, and intelligent mind, quite captivated her.

“A truce to school girls, and school balls,” cried Lady Clancarron, “a wider field for your depredations is opening, Lord Berkhamstead’s grand masquerade is next week, and if some bold being do not confine your mischief-making powers, by securing you as an exclusive possession, you will steal wits as well as hearts.

“Do you go in character, Miss De Dunstanville?” asked Don Diego, recovering from one of his reveries, and thinking it

necessary to say something by way of joining in the conversation.

“Not in my own, Don Diego,” she replied, “for charity’s sweet sake ; as a display of such fascinating properties would be dangerous, it seems, to the poor creatures who would peep.”

Mrs. Moreland’s aversion was strong and decided to this species of entertainment ; and though she knew her influence would deter Jane from partaking it, she did not conceive she had any right to controul her, except what affection might offer against it ; seeing, therefore, that her young friend was more than usually anxious for this festivity, she resolved to attend her there ; she had never been at a masquerade herself, but always heard them described as scenes contaminating to female delicacy, where unlicensed plea-

sure reared its destructive banner to the subversion of innocence and feminine propriety.

When Mrs. Moreland did remonstrate on any subject with Miss De Dunstanville, she never relinquished her point till conviction effected her purpose; but on this occasion, much as her heart recoiled, she offered neither argument nor opposition, but with perfect quietness began preparing the sober attire of a quaker for her own appearance.

Miss De Dunstanville, as she did not wish to appear conspicuous, chose a nun's dress of the order of black sisters; and, notwithstanding all the serious looks of Mrs. Moreland, Jane's heart palpitated with delight as she anticipated this masquerade.

Jane had a soul attuned to pleasure, and

it must be confessed, she had entered with spirit into all the gaieties of the *beau monde*; and as she moved in the very first circles of fashion, it could not be expected but that her amusements would sometimes verge towards dissipation;—she glittered a star of the first magnitude; led the ton, had her box at the opera; nay, we are sorry, but she could even bet her cool hundred, and lose it too with a non-chalence becoming an heiress. She had always been an expert and elegant horse-woman, and without having taken one lesson, or borrowed one grace from the modern whips, she could drive her curricie in a very spirited style, and, but for the attempering judgment, and gentle remonstrances of Mrs. Moreland, to whose opinions she ever gave unqualified deference, Jane, the innocent, artless, attached

Jane, might, by the prevalence of pernicious example, and in the indulgence of *haute ton*, have sometimes forgotten the practice of the virtues which had so distinguished her early years, and rendered her the delight of an adoring parent.

The unaffected graces of her lovely figure, with her splendid fortune, attracted a numerous train of admirers ; but so well timed, and artfully applied were Lady Clancarron's hints, and so judiciously did she insinuate that the solemn engagements subsisting between her and Lord Clancarron were reciprocal, that the mercenary crowd was awed to silence, while those possessing real honour and feeling, shrunk from addressing the affianced bride of another, and did voluntary homage to her beauty and worth in respectful silence.

Lady Clancarron had derived many solid advantages from her intimacy with Jane. "The improvements of *dear* old Clancarron Castle were very expensive, but it certainly would be a paradise, though so very far north;" on *these* occasions Jane's banker was very convenient, and always ready.

Then there were delicate hints that "really both mamma and brother were parsimonious even of her own fortune;" these often decorated the artful Florence with many a glittering gew-gaw, to the diminution of her cousin's purse.

Still Lady Clancarron was dissatisfied; she could not feel so assured of her son's success with Jane, as she wished the world to believe; his progress in her good opinion was not slow, it was on the contrary retrogressive, and her Ladyship

frequently told him, while the angriest passions inflamed her features, and deformed her bosom, that while he was manœuvring his whip, and driving his servants, some one with more wit, and dexterity too, would drive Jane to church.

Lord Clancarron's education had never accustomed him to control; and the voice of counsel or remonstrance was sure to strengthen what it was intended to rectify or subdue; and it was on these occasions only, that candour graced the lip of this most ungracious peer.

The Countess had one morning, with more than usual energy, endeavoured to assert her maternal authority; and stimulate him to exertion, when he replied, with a degree of violence altogether uncommon. "Split me, madam, now, but all this is cursedly provoking; I am ready

to carry her off when you please, or where you please, to the church, to the coffin, or to the Devil, if you please ; but petrify me if I can court her ; and strike me ugly, if I ever enter her heathenish rooms on those select nights, in which you think so much might be done with her, but I find so much ill-bred truth one does not wish to hear, and so much unfashionable propriety one does not wish to see, that I am devoured with sentimentalism, blue devilism, in a word Morelandism ; and were it not for the hope of one day, by hook or by crook, driving bang-up to the acres and guineas, strike me speechless, but the penance would be a bore, an execrable bore.”

“ She must be carried, however,” said her ladyship ; and after giving a few minutes to meditation, she ordered her car-

riage, though the hour was very early, and in half an hour, behold her seated at Jane's breakfast table.

"The world is really so fond of you, my sweet girl," said Lady Clancarron, after the usual salutations of the morning were past, "it really so monopolizes your time, that I have vainly endeavoured to have you *tête-à-tête* for an hour."

"This morning then," replied Jane, with a smile, "a head-ache secures me all to yourself, for I am invisible till evening.

The countess repeated, "All to myself!" and looked very tenderly at her, while Mrs. Moreland arose to retire.

"My dear Mrs. Moreland, pray oblige me with your presence, I may want your assistance with this dear, dangerous girl."

"Miss De Dunstanville has every

claim on my best services," returned Mrs. Moreland; "her honour and her happiness are among my first and dearest considerations, yet I arrogate no right to influence her opinions, however she may allow me to assist her judgment."

"I feel assured of your propriety in every point," said her ladyship, and her smile was most complacent, "therefore, I have requested your support."

Jane and her friend were silent, and her ladyship, with tolerably well affected emotion began her attack.

"The long and faithful attachment which has ever cemented the families of De Dunstanville and Clancarron, we need not now expatiate on; it is felt sacred in every heart, individually and collectively felt, and it is my prayer that it may be rivetted and sanctified by the tenderest ties."

Jane looked all attention.

“ Lord Clancarron’s fortune is ample ; though as in many illustrious families, ready money is often wanting ; his title most ancient ;—he has the prevalent follies of the day, it is true, and they certainly obscure the innate virtues of a noble nature, yet his heart can appreciate worth and reverence virtue ; you, my charming girl, must be his guiding star, so bright a mistress will make every path delightful. You think, I know you think he misapplies his time and talents—he does so—but condescend Miss De Dunstanville to let your judgment direct—”

“ My dear Madam,” interrupted Jane, “ Lord Clancarron’s own feelings can best direct him ; I am so perfect a stranger to the properties of his mind, and to his ge-

nius, that my opinion would make sad blunders."

"Alas ! alas !" and Lady Clancarron claspt her hands in seeming anguish as she rejoined, "I know what you have made him, I know what you can make him."

"I made him !" repeated Jane, really astonished, "what, madam, have I made him ?"

"A lover, an adoring lover !"

Jane started.

"Do not start, Miss De Dunstanville, you cannot affect amazement."

Our heiress possessing a clear perception, and correct judgment, had for some time formed her estimate of Lady Clancarron's character ; and now, in one reflective glance, could develope her motives and intentions respecting herself.

"No, my dearest child, you must not

affect ignorance of Clancarron's passion; your union completed, I have no more to do on earth;" and a tear was pressed into the service—"no more, but I can then descend to the grave in peace."

"I should be much concerned, Lady Clancarron," replied Jane, with perfect calmness, yet resolved in her manner, "did your Ladyship allow your peace in any way to depend on such fallacious ideas; hopes, my obvious indifference never could have made them."

"Indifference! good God! and do you allow him no hope—give him no encouragement to hope?"

Jane was very generous, and very good at giving, as her Ladyship had often experienced, but with all her generousities and givings, this she neither would, nor

could give, therefore, looking what she felt, she firmly replied,

“Madam, I cannot.”

“*Cannot!* Miss De Dunstanville!”

“*Cannot*, Lady Clancarron.”

“Merciful heaven! you are not married?”

“Not quite; yet I can marry but one.”

“Who—what?” exclaimed her Ladyship, and her agitation now became indeed unaffected—“Miss De Dunstanville! Mrs. Moreland.”—She paused, and a tumult of thought rushed over her perturbed mind, which burst forth with irrepressible violence.

“Yes, it is, it must be so.—You have sons, Mrs. Moreland,” and her eyes flashed indignant fire—“your Alfred—he—”

The impulse was irresistible; Mrs.

Moreland burst into a loud laugh—"My Alfred! Lady Clancarron?"

"Oh, the dear Alfred," echoed Jane, laughing louder than her friend, "the saucy boy! he has given me a willow wreath already, and mounted the colours of the bonniest lassie in the world. No, Lady Clancarron, my heart —" but the opportune entrance of the harp-master prevented further discussion, when Lady Clancarron, bursting with all the passions which assail a violent and vindictive heart, defeated and disappointed in its purposes, took her leave, yet secretly vowing if she had either invention, art, or stratagem, she would find a way to humble the heiress and secure her fortune.

CHAPTER II.

LORD BERKHAMSTEAD had but one son, and as that son could only be twenty-one once in his whole life, the father determined an era so auspicious to the illustrious race, should be celebrated with as much splendour, taste, and magnificence, as possible. The scene of festive gaiety was at a villa, belonging to that nobleman, on the banks of the Thames, and had the preference to town, as the gardens and pleasure grounds would allow of a larger company, and more unconfined conveniences and decorations.

Masquerades, in our modish day, are so

generally known, and so frequently described by more able delineators, that I will leave the glowing imagination of the reader to conceive all that was gay, brilliant, festive, and luxurious; every art that could tempt or allure, captivate or enchant; every thing that could hush the voice of reason and awaken sense, deaden propriety, and excite intemperance, heighten the throbbing feelings, and kindle the fire of passion, all were here displayed to a height that might have gratified the voluptuous, and almost palled upon the sickly vitiated taste of sensuality itself.

To Jane's pure soul it appeared the region of enchantment; she felt as if in fairy land, and never dreaming of beings less innocent than herself, she indulged the sweet delirium into which pleasure

had lulled her senses, and unapprehensive of evil as of danger, gave freedom to the brilliant glow of a gay and sportive imagination.

She, with Mrs. Moreland and Alfred, joined Lady Clancarron's party, but were soon unavoidably separated, yet by private signals, more than by the dresses, which many frequently changed, they knew how to recognize each other.

The novelty of some grotesque character had attracted Jane's notice, and she was about to make some remark to Alfred, when he was almost forcibly dragged from her by a boisterous sailor, who was pulling along with him a flower girl. Alfred was dressed as a tar, and the brother of the sea mistaking him for some other, vociferated—

“ Halo ! messmate, how lays the land ? does she warm ? will she melt ? ”

“ Nova Zembla, chills and icicles, ’ cried Alfred, humouring him.

“ To her again, Jack, that’s my tight one ! ” and here, we’ll strew your way over with flowers, my brave boy, ” and as he sung his ditty, he scattered the contents of his damsel’s basket.

During this, Jane had found herself separated from her party, and though unprotected, was entirely unalarmed ; in another instant, fancying she saw Mrs. Moreland at a little distance with a group of gypseys, she was tripping nimbly towards her, when a tall figure, in magician’s robes, grasped her arm, saying, in a voice not altogether strange to her ear, though at the moment lost to recollection.

“ I know you. ”

“Let me then profit by your knowledge,” said Jane; “I wish to seek my friends, can your knowledge discern them.”

“*Friends!*” he repeated, giving emphasis to the word, “where, or who are they?” he added, taking her hand.

“Unhand me, Sir.”

She was unheeded, he still held her, and she felt his trembling hand grasp her’s as he repeated, “I know *you*; know *much*, and most certain is my knowledge; by virtue of my character—my character of mystery I speak.”

“Indulge your humour, Sir,” replied Jane, affecting a fearless air, though her heart palpitated to be near some one she knew, “indulge it; I am no stranger to the mystic jargon of these motley scenes.”

Moved along by the pressing, thronging crowd, they had reached an alcove, where seats of green velvet, raised like irregular hillocks, invited the weary to take momentary rest from the tumult of varied delights.

Janes ideas felt rather confused, by the rapid succession of passing objects, and in the hope of seeing some one pass she really did know, she seated herself at the opening of the recess.

“*I know you !*” again reiterated the magician, and his voice grew deepened ; and as he stood beside her, she caught the fiery beam of a heavy eye, and its glare was blasting as it shot through the mask ; he spoke, and his tones were appalling ; the words dark, inexplicable, and mysterious.

“ Bright being !” he cried, “ brightest being that often breaks upon my black-

ened night, I would spare *thee*;—be warned, beware! thy greatness is departing from thee; nay, hearken, and be warned; listen, before the gathering tempest bursts, before the deepening ruin breaks upon thy brain and heart, before it crushes thee, and thou in bitterness bewail that ever thou wast born, and execrate the day that gave thee birth; listen and obey!”

Jane’s blood felt curdling; speech was choked in the horror of thought, and she gaspt, but scarcely respired.

“Hildebrande *Fitz Ormond*.” She shrieked in convulsive terror; he went on, “Hildebrande *Fitz Ormond* is lost; to thee is lost for ever. This night decides *thy* fate, fixes *thy* destiny. I know thee; know all; know what thou wilt be; what thou must be; aye, ere we part, what thou must be. But dark as are my words, in

light shall all my deeds be done. Come, be wise, seek those thou dost know."

Bewildered in thought, and harrowed in apprehension, she arose from her seat ; his voice grew softened.

"We will seek your Mrs. Moreland, Miss De Dunstanville ; nay, start not, I said I knew you, and when in her presence, a few words will break on your appalled ear, firm in their purport as yon fixed star blazing in its orb above us, and irreversible and immutable as the word of him that fixed it there."

Enveloped in terror, confusion, and amazement, and led, or rather dragged by the mysterious being, Jane continued to rush through crowds of masks, while her wandering eye in vain sought to discover some one she could speak to, and

who would extricate her from her terrifying companion.

“Where am I dragged?” she cried at length, “where am I going?” “To Mrs. Moreland; we seek Mrs. Moreland,” said the magician.

Poor incautious Jane! thy feeble feet were bearing thee far from the mild and sacred shelter of protecting friendship; thou wert in the hands of a Demon. A suspicious dread of something glanced over her mind.

“I will go no farther,” she cried, suddenly snatching her hand from his grasp, as he was hurrying her down a narrow avenue, whose light was shadowy and obscure, from the green lamps hung on the lower branches of the trees.

“I will go no farther, I will return.” At that instant her other arm was violently

seized, and swift as the whirlwind, she was borne between the magician and another, till they reached the ruins of a Gothic temple, very remote from the scene of festivity.

The building had no roof, they were exposed to the open air ; the moon was rolling, in silent majesty, through her realms of ether, and the stars were glittering among the silvery clouds ; the voice of revelry could be no longer heard, and the sounds of distant music, as they blended with the early gale of morning, now broke faintly on the surrounding stillness.

Jane's sensations grew maddening ; to her fears she could give no name, yet as she felt the approach of dangers unimagined, she felt a proud fortitude rise in

proportion, to resist indignity, in whatever form it might threaten.

“ Enter ! ” said the magician. A pause ensued, and in that pause the beating throbs of Jane’s heart could be heard ; the magician spoke.

“ Here are no sacred shrines, nor awful altars, with mystic mummary to bind a compact ; they swell, indeed, the pomp of proud ceremony, and may operate on the weak and superstitious, but neither strengthen human institutions, nor sanctify the marriage vow above.”

Jane stood stiffened in thought, her blood congealed.

A dark lantern was produced, and emitted its feeble gleam over the ruin, the magician took a paper from under his robe, and in a language Jane understood not, spoke a few words to his companion ; the

paper was unfolded, but of its form Jane was ignorant ; it was a marriage license, and as the words it contained were uttered by the magician's kind-hearted accomplice, they fell like burning bolts upon her innocent soul ;—yet the powers of that soul strengthened ; new spirits were kindling in her blood, and a proud energy swelled her heart ; while a fortitude, not her own, upheld the weakness of feminine apprehension, it gave a dignified defiance to her form, and she felt almost super-human ; a haughty lightning darted from her eyes, and in the superiority of a virtuous mind, she commanded them to “stop.”

He appointed by *man* to minister Heaven's will ; he who with sacrilegious lip, and impious heart was even profaning the holy rite, he who for perishable dross was endangering an imperishable spirit, by hurl-

ing innocence to ruin, subverting the gracious ordinances of God, and turning a hallowed contract to a demon's plot, *he*, for a moment, felt "how awful virtue is," and did stop.

"Jane De Dunstanville," said the magician, in tones that broke terrific and uncommon on the aching sense, "hope neither subterfuge nor escape, however near in thy imagination, human aid is far, far off from thee; my plans, I thank a wise precaution, bid defiance to prevention; hearken, then, to my few promised words.

"Be mine; in this instant, irrevocably mine; willingly, entirely mine! Shouldst thou vainly, madly resist, reject the grace a transient feeling, which visits me not often, offers now, tremble!—thy honour fallen, thy fortunes ruined, thy name blasted, thy reputation gone, shame, beggary and

despair, will hunt thee to nature's verge, nor leave thee in the grave, so fell, so dire, so deadly is my vengeance, when awoke by passions which mortals shudder but to name."

Jane's pulse beat with fevered agony, yet every fibre of her heart felt firm, and in a proud determination to perish, but never to submit to a ruffian violation of every law, human and divine, she raised her fine eyes to him whoseeth in secret;—her hands were held, but her spirit, her pure spirit felt rising above the enfeebling "wrappings of mortality;" she held a moment's communing with her God, and caught a ray from the celestial presence which cheered, irradiated, and sustained her innocent bosom; a holy energy pervaded every nerve, every aching sense, and in the calm triumph

of supreme aid, as the figure attired in canonicals demanded,

“Wilt thou have this man—” and she interrupted him in a firm voice,

“*I will not.*”

Her firmness for an instant awed them, and she continued, “what dark assassin presumes to violate the sanctity of marriage rites by such a bold defiance of our laws? think me in your power; I dare its sternest vengeance; and learn, the soul that fears not death, can smile at every ghastly terror; the soul that trusts in God, can fear no danger.”

The grandeur of her manner, with the deep and impressive energy of her tones, inspired a momentary dread. They felt appalled, and for a moment irresolution suspended their design; but the magician

soon recovered boldness enough to be active.

“Perdition on this war of words!” he shrieked—“my deeds are damning, and shall be daring;” and he seized her violently round the waist, and bore her forcibly from the ruin.

She uttered one wild and dismal shriek; it was full of helplessness, terror, agony, and despair; and in a few moments Jane would have been a wretch, and lost for ever, but a poor honest peasant, with his faithful mastiff, happening to pass at the critical moment, and without knowing more than that a woman was in distress, and, as he conjectured, about to be murdered by robbers, he gave the word to his shaggy companion, “who, nothing loth,” calmly seized the magician by the arm; when, compelled from excruciating

pain, he let his prisoner fall to the earth.

She instantly started from the ground, and, without staying for the ceremony of thanking her deliverer, with the rapidity of lightning she flew through the grounds, and guided by the brilliancy of the moon, and the dying sounds of the music, stopped not till once more among a few stragglers, who, tempted by the fineness of the morning, had quitted the scene of tumult for a momentary calm. Her brain felt burning, her spirits were in a ferment, and the throbs of her heart were audible between the pauses of each convulsive gasp she had strength to respire. She was unconscious of her safety, every thought was in the wildest confusion, and altogether unable to support herself any longer, she fell at the feet of

a gentleman, whose figure was wrapped in a black domino, as if for concealment.

The word——“mercy!”——in a tremulous voice, was all she could utter, and then the torture of feeling was lost in deep insensibility.

The ear on which the plaintive cry for mercy had now vibrated, was attuned to mercy, and his heart ever admitted the soft appeal of feminine sorrow; he raised the fainting angel in his arms, and bore her to a rustic temple, which at the moment happened to be vacant, and while gently supporting her on his bosom, he removed her mask to sprinkle her face with lavender, when a stream of light, from a pendant lamp, falling full on her pale features, she was recognized.

The black domino gave a convulsive start ; “ Angel of mercy ! ” he cried, “ sweet image of the purest beings, and was *thy* prayer, thy own prayer for mercy, and *to me* ! Blessed creature, whom didst thou fear ? who could alarm thy gentleness ? ”

Jane’s eyes unclosed, and their soft beam fell on *the stranger*.

“ I am safe ! I feel I am safe,” she cried, and a serene and indefinable delight diffused itself through her perturbed bosom. “ Oh yes, quite safe with *you* ; but I have been —— ” and she put her hand over her eyes as if to recollect her scattered ideas, when in the next instant, one in the habit of a friar was at her feet.

“ *Worshipped Mary Fortrose !* ” cried a voice, which warmed every throbbing

pulse to rapture, and gave ecstasy to the languid spirits. — — — — —

Jane beheld at her feet, while in the stranger's arms, Hildebrande Fitz Ormond.

CHAPTER IV.

“HILDEBRANDE FITZ ORMOND! my own beloved Fitz Ormond,” cried Jane, forgetful of every thing, of every one in existence but himself. They were now both unmasked, and the stranger viewed them with emotions new and complicated; long forgotten feelings beat wildly, and were swelling his heart; and as a deepened groan burst forth, with a burning hand he clasped Fitz Ormond’s, and pressing it to his lips, cold in quivering agony, the words, “God, I thank thee!” were faintly heard, when, shrouding his head in the folds of his domino, he started up, and

mixing among the crowd disappeared, and was no more seen.

“Blessed girl, my matchless Mary, we will part no more!” cried Fitz Ormond, the fire of a pure and hallowed passion brightening his cheek, while chastened rapture was shining in his eyes—“we will never part.”

“We will, only to meet again,” said Jane, attempting to be calm; her soft tremulous accents, while they penetrated every sense, repressed an ardour which reached to agony. “Yes dear, dear Hildebrande, indeed, we will meet again, Jane De Dunstanville, this night, this very night ————”

“Speak not of Jane De Dunstanville now,” he interrupted, “be this moment, this precious moment, our own, sacred to

love and virtue, and to the sanctified wishes of our own souls."

"You must love her," resumed Jane, "she is the arbitress of our fate; our felicity is dear to her as her own, and circumstances this night have determined her; her love will no more divide us. Mary will be your's, for ever your's, and your wife, in your cottage, will never envy the proud turrets of De Dunstanville, nor sigh for scenes of greatness."

Fitz Ormond felt imparadised; the rich, soft, satisfied feeling of that one moment, was worth a millinium of rapture to common minds. Extreme emotion almost suspended the effort to respire, and his breath grew low and quick; he held her hands, "speak not *yet*," he again said, not yet, for this dear enchantment might dissolve. Blessed assurance! it mingles

with mind ; blends with soul ; and we are for ever *one*, I feel we are one."

" Be more calm, Hildebrande, and listen," interrupted Jane, rather alarmed for his reason, for bliss was almost refined to torture ; " be composed and listen ; in three days come to No. — in Portman Square, I reside there with a dear friend who will assist us in our future arrangements, and in the mean time," added she, smiling, " you can give orders about the cottage you described."

The innocent magic of her voice at any time could charm his senses ; the tumult of joy subsided, and he grew composed ; and altogether heedless, nay, almost insensible to the motley group passing and re-passing the alcove where they sat conversing, they forgot all time, and unconsciously suffered an hour to elapse, with-

out Jane having once recollected that her disappearance and long absence must have caused alarm.

“ Dear Hildebrande,” she resumed, “ I must positively seek my party, and when I have joined them, leave me ; I wish no interrogatories nor observation till our fate be beyond the power of malign interposition ; I must not be interrogated dear, Hildebrande” she continued, seeing him about to speak ; “ *you are my subject* till in our cottage, and then *you* shall reign sovereign for life.”

“ Angel of sweetness ! but one word, what caused your alarm ? Who was the black domino ?”

Jane’s cheek grew pale ; he might meet the magician, she knew the consequence—and quickly replied, “ I incautiously wandered through the shrubbery—and a

dog—it was a fierce mastiff—but it did not harm me—no—not in the least, his master took care of me, and another time I shall seek him and thank him.”

Hildebrande thought the rapid manner in which she described the cause of her alarm rather extraordinary ; but he was too happy to make any comment, “ and the person who was so friendly, supporting my Mary, when her dulcet tones blessed my ear, who is he, my lovely one ? ”

“ I have seen him twice,” said Jane, “ before to night ; he is melancholy, and always mysterious ; I have thought him like my grandfather, and he has an indefinable power over my feelings.”

“ Over *your* feelings, my Mary ? ”

“ Over my feelings, Hildebrande ; hereafter you shall know all ; but, indeed—indeed, as you are not a friar of our or-

der, so you must excuse my further confession at present, and now to seek my friends.’

The masks were resumed, and soon reaching the grand hall, where the guests were assembling around different tables to enjoy the luxuries of the feast, Jane soon recognised Mrs. Moreland, who welcomed her return with unaffected pleasure, though she had suffered very little alarm, from Lady Florence having assured her, she saw Miss De Dunstanville join Lady Benvolia’s party.

Hildebrande Fitz Ormond, as commanded, took no farther notice of his supposed Mary; but, having discovered himself to the Clancarron family, he joined them for a short time, during which he whispered his Lordship to meet him next morning, and then bidding them good

night, though the sun had for some time proclaimed the day, he retired to his apartments, in all the luxury of delighted expectation ; and antideluvian, and gothic, and unfashionable as it may be considered, by our modern beaux and belles in this age of reason and refinement, Hildebrande Fitz Ormond, in the full glow of youth, elevated spirits, and anticipated felicity, sunk on his knees, and offered up a prayer of thanksgiving to Him who benignly watches over all our ways.

Neither vanity nor variety had marked the days and nights of Fitz Ormond since we left him rationally devoting his time to literary pursuits ; he had, however, occasionally mixed with the *beau monde*, but so cautious was he at encountering the captivating and admired heiress, that he often refused pressing invitations to the

superior parties in which she was said to move a goddess ; and, as he never could dream of meeting his own lowly, lovely, unadorned Mary, in these splendid circles, he preferred the contemplation of her inoffensive beauties and graces as they irradiated the recesses of his own adoring heart to the pretensions of her high-born, high-fortuned, supposed rival.

He had received a ticket for Lord Berkhamstead's masquerade, from his friend Mr. Murray, and, wearied at being always wise and never fastidious, he joined the fascinating scene, little, indeed, anticipating the fascination which there greeted him.

His supposed Mary's soft encouragement and tender confessions, her permission to prepare for her reception, with her ecstatic assurance of becoming immediately

his wife, had thrown every sense into a commotion which almost reached delirium, and it was not till many hours profound repose had restored him to quiet reflection, that he could sufficiently arrange his scattered ideas so as to become active even in his own ardent wishes.

The note for two thousand pounds, with which he had so generously accommodated Lord Clancarron, had been some days due; the recollected conversation with Mr. Murray, gave him some passing uneasy thoughts, but they did pass, for the honourable mind suspects no dishonour, which renders the unexpected blow more heavy and severe on the guileless heart.

The appointment made at the masquerade his Lordship *forgot* to attend, and as a gentle *souvenir* became now indispensable, Fitz Ormond paid rather an early visit at

Clancarron house. Unfortunately, his Lordship was gone out on particular business, but would write, it would suit him to write next day ; so said the Countess ; and by her manner of saying it, proved she was no stranger to the business ; which in some degree quieted certain apprehensions that Fitz Ormond, malgre all his confidence, could not entirely subdue.

“ Accept my arrangement,” said her Ladyship, as if willing and anxious to accommodate every thing in the most desirable manner—you were engaged for the evening, but come, *sans ceremonie*, to dinner. I intended you a superlative pleasure,” added her Ladyship, in an introduction to Miss De Dunstanville, and, indeed, told her you, a relation, would be here ; but, oh ! the caprices of courted beauties, and great heiresses, she gave

me a most cold and positive negative—and altogether declined my invitation.”

Fitz Ormond had absolutely started from his chair, and the blood rushed in deep suffusion over his cheeks.

Her Ladyship surveyed him with astonishment.

“Have you ever seen Miss De Dunstanville, Mr. Fitz Ormond?”

“Once, Madam,” and Fitz Ormond’s confusion increased; “only once.”

“And that once must have been a momentous once indeed,” repeated Lady Florence, with ill-repressed malignness, “else burning cheeks give very false evidence.”

“So sacred, so dear is that lady’s remembrance within my heart,” resumed Fitz Ormond, and his look inspired awe, and imposed obedience while he spake, “that her very name must not be uttered in my

hearing, but with the reverence such excellence deserves ; yet worlds would not tempt me to see her ;—no, we never meet ;—I cannot meet her.”

“ I cry you mercy, stricken swain, for you are positively far gone in *la belle passion* ; but what a phalanx of formidables, and right honourables, you must encounter and subdue, to attain this Hisperian fruit, this treasure, this——”

“ Florence, Florence ! repress these sallies of exuberant mirth ; I beg you to be rational ; Jane De Dunstanville is not an object for badinage,” said Lady Clancarron, with well-dissembled seriousness ; “ do not heed her rattle, Mr. Fitz Ormond, I can appreciate your sentiment ; join us at dinner, we are quite *en famille*, and your petit arrangement with Clancarron can be made. In the evening we shall be bril-

liant ; no excuse :—and now for the fatigues and claims of a vile, troublesome, shopping morning.”

“Some mystery lurks, some mischief broods, in that *once* Fitz Ormond speaks of,” cried Lady Clancarron, in secret council with her son and daughter, after his departure, for his Lordship had gone no farther than into his mother’s boudoir, his business to avoid the man he had wronged, and now he was wronged, that he hated, and whom he had neither ability, honor, nor inclination to redress.

“The mystery must be developed,” she continued, *mais en attendant*, listen, and crown me for a Machiavelian contriver ; our bank is drained, a supply is wanted, the jew inexorable, Dovey and French plate bring nothing ; Fitz Ormond must be the pigeon, and now observe me well ;

after dinner, fair words, and fine *wine*, you understand; in the evening, seat him at a *proper table*, with a *proper party*; do you comprehend? be on the alert, and while deep in the game, when it is *critical*, I will whisper a name which I perceive drowns every faculty; senses and sensations will turn to *chaos*, and the commotion operating with—with--Clancarron, it will effect a most delectable transfer, from Cornhill to Clancarron House."

Modern friendship; modern honour; modern manners; modern feelings.

After dinner the ladies retired to dress, and poor Fitz Ormond and the peer were left alone over their wine; when, with much delicacy, yet with equal decision, he requested payment; assuring his Lordship, that now most important arrange-

ments demanded every guinea he could collect.

In the true bang-up style Lord Clancarron swore, "he was prime for payment—cash up, d—n me, to-morrow," cried he, "honour among thieves—aye, split me—pay to-morrow."

CHAPTER IV.

THE evening came, and brought a fashionable assemblage to the Countess Clancarron's drawing rooms ; music, dancing, and cards, filled up the jocund hours ; yet Fitz Ormond could not be gay ; at times a coldness crept through his blood, burning pains darted through his head, and wild imaginings were confusing his brain ; he wished to retire, but was detained ; and, feeling an aching weakness pervade his limbs, which left him almost passive, under the pretext of amusement, he was seated at table with a chosen party, where they were playing high.

Fitz Ormond disdained the vice of gambling, yet, if his character had a dark trait, it was an inclination for play, but, he had never indulged it; but now entreated as he was, rendered almost unconscious, and, little aware of any premeditated treachery he complied; was fortunate, and won some hundreds; fatal lure!

They played deep, and bets ran high; luck turned, but then he could not recede; he lost considerably, grew desperate, and, would double his bets.

In that moment, the friend in female guise approached his ear.

“Do not be surprised—Jane De Dunstanville is coming.”

Something flashed before his eyes, his brain burned, his pulses throbbed; yet,

still he held his cards as if impatient to be done.

They went on ; insensibly he joined,

“ A cool hundred.”

“ Done.”

“ Two hundred ;—who’s afraid !”

“ Four hundred, my buck.”

“ Eight hundred, you doldrum.”

“ A thousand, d—n me, I’m prime.”

“ Done for two thousand, my lads of mettle.”

“ Three thousand, there’s life in a muscle, split me !”

“ Four thousand !”

Alas ! poor Fitz Ormond ! his impurpled lip uttered—“ Done !”

His heart it was undone.

A friend of Clancarron’s spoke.

“ Bang-up to the mark, d—n me, I’m your man.”

And Fitz Ormond *was* undone.

The name of Miss De Dunstanville was buzzing around ; the cards, the candles, the company, all swam in horrid tumult before his tortured sight.

Jane would behold him, and *how* ! She would repeat what she beheld, and to *whom* ?

The creature reared, existing by her bounty and care, the betrothed of Mary a gamester ! a detected, ruined gamester ; his noble nature could not bear the fearful retrospect ; the burning pang of remorse seized his confused senses ; he gaspt, “ Mary !—Jane ! —” undone ! he would have added, but the word died unuttered on his whitened lip, and, sinking from his chair, he was carried motionless from the room.

Too well had Lady Clancarron’s ma-

chinations succeeded ; the destroyer, aided by a kindred fiend, had drugged the wine which lulled his senses in stupor ; the table and party were pre-arranged for their base purpose ; no Miss De Dunstanville came ; no Miss De Dunstanville was coming.

“ The colouring is too deep,” cries the guileless one, unknowing in the subtilities of fashion. Alas ! no ; it is the dark portraiture of modern life.

CHAPTER V.

NOTWITHSTANDING that fatigue and alarms, and the agitation such fearful alarms might be allowed to produce, Jane could not retire to her pillow, till she had reposed the strange occurrences of the evening in the faithful bosom of her truly maternal friend Mrs. Moreland ; she detailed the whole, with as much accuracy as possible, but memory retained very indistinct and imperfect traces of the magician's figure and voice, though she felt convinced that neither was altogether unfamiliar.

The honest peasant she resolved to re-

munerate, in proportion to the service he had rendered her in such an hour of peril; and even the poor trusty mastiff, in having been the more active agent of her preservation, she also resolved to purchase and reward by a life of ease and plenty. But among all her generous and grateful resolutions, none so entirely gratified Mrs. Moreland as her avowed determination to drop all her fanciful mystery: mystery which might have been productive of such mischief and misery, and in the sanctified abode of a husband's sheltering bosom, even the bosom of the faithful Hildebrande Fitz Ormond, secure a refuge from future dangers, and the plottings and machinations of the envious and malignant, which, it was too evident, would never cease till her marriage extinguished every hope of ensnaring her guileless nature.

“ You may not admit the surmise, my dear young friend,” said Mrs. Moreland, “ yet I think it *possible* the stranger and magician may be confederates; beware of any future encounter, my child; be on your guard, and let nothing tempt you to receive strange visitors till your arrangements are made, and publicly announced with Mr. Fitz Ormond.”

“ To that I most willingly accede,” replied Jane, convinced of her friend’s judicious solicitude, “ but banish the injurious thought of the stranger being any way connected with the magician; his speaking eye tells truth; some inexplicable sensation makes him dear, and my heart feels safety in his presence. Oh, my dear friend! could I but know his name, learn his history? He is so like some thing my very soul loves, that he must be good.”

Jane's fine face was irradiated by the glow of goodness which warmed her own bosom, as she justified and defended him from suspicion, and Mrs. Moreland kissing the generous enthusiast's cheek, they each took a cup of coffee and retired to their respective chambers.

The intermediate days till the expected visit of Fitz Ormond, she was denied to all company, and devoted the time to writing, and arranging matters with her late grandfather's solicitor; for it was still the resolution of her generous heart, to marry him as *the heir*, instead of humbling him with the idea, that he married *the heiress*.

At length, the morning of appointment dawned; the hour of expectation came, and Jane's impatient eye watched every passing movement of the time-piece. At last the hour sounded; it was the sweetest

tone that ever struck on the ear of Jane, it might be followed by Fitz Ormond's step.

Mrs. Moreland, from motives of delicacy, advised that their first interview should be unwitnessed, "it will be too interesting for any eye—must be sacred to your own hearts ;" and, attended by Alfred, she went to pay a morning visit to Lady Ellen Sterling.

Jane was now alone, the modest colouring of chastened feeling brightened her beautiful cheek ; her eyes beaming with the radiancy of virtuous sensibility, and the innocent pride of surprising him she loved, with such pure and holy fervour, with the wealth and distinctions of De Dunstanville's heiress, when he only expected the lowly, unknown, portionless

Mary, heightened every charm, and gave a finishing to every softened grace.

Jane was in her boudoir, a full length picture of her revered grandfather was before her; the eye seemed to look with delighted complacency, and it gave an exquisite richness to thought; she exclaimed, in mild rapture, "This moment, revered being, you look even from your heaven, on this dear moment, when your children will be one!"

The sweetest anticipations fluttered at her heart, and every idea as it arose, was attuned to innocent delight.

But an hour had elapsed, and still no Fitz Ormond appeared; "he comes not with a lover's haste," occurred to her mind, but she repressed the thought—it never stained her lip.

Another hour passed on, and still he

came not ; tender apprehension began to be busy ; it shook her gentle bosom, when a loud knocking announced a visitor, and made the circling current revulse around her heart ; she started from her chair, but unable to move a step, she staggered and sunk down again ;—she heard a foot ascend the stairs—her composure gave way, her spirits receded, and she felt very faint ; the room door slowly opened, her heart throbbed, her very soul hung on her ashy lip——

“ Fitz Ormond ! my Fitz Ormond ! ”

Two gentlemen were introduced ; un-announced, they were introduced.

The figure of one was clumsy and uncouth ; and his features, coarse and rudely harsh, seemed darkened by the low cunning of a mean and malign spirit ; a bushy brow added heaviness to an eye whose very

gleam seemed withering to the peace of mortals ; but there were two.

The other—he was Don Diego d’Almeyda.

When rapture swells the innocent bosom with expectation of a coming joy, what bitter name has torture for the disappointment ? it has been felt, but never was described ; it was Jane De Dunstanville’s feeling in that moment, but she never gave it a description.

A delicate sense of propriety, which ever regulated her actions, now prevailed ; and, repressing the painful emotion wringing her heart, she arose, and, with her usual modest dignity of manner, requested they would be seated.

“ We thank your courtesy, Miss De Dunstanville,” said Don Diego, bowing coldly ; “ but as business like ours admits

of little compliment, we can dispense with ceremony."

His abruptness rather surprised, and in another, would have disgusted her ; but the dark and sullen reserve of this foreigner had inspired but one sentiment, and, in her open and guileless soul it was unalterably the same ; she therefore simply returned his bow, and silently waited to hear what his business could be with her.

" You consider yourself," said he, taking a long stride towards her ; " Do you not consider yourself the legal, undisputed heiress of De Dunstanville ?"

Jane raised her eyes, and fixed them on his severe dark visage.

" It has never, Sir, been the subject of my consideration."

" Do you inherit by descent, or by an exclusive bequest ?"

“ I cannot conjecture, Don Diego, why I am questioned, and by a stranger too,” said she, rather proudly, “ on such a subject ; yet to conclude the conference, I inherit by both.”

“ You inherit by neither, madam.”

Jane smiled ; in the proud and conscious security of her rights she smiled.

“ Till you can invalidate them, Don Diego, you will permit me to plead an engagement and retire.”

“ Stay !” he cried, impeding her purpose, his stern eye glaring malignly on her ; “ stay, and hearken to an offer that means you well ; rejection sinks you to beggary. Lord Clancarron loves you, he would marry you ; accept him, and for the love I bear his sister, Lady Florence, I will dower you with five thousand pounds a year from the De Dunstanville estates.”

“Matchless generosity !” said Jane, and she laughed ; but it was a strange laugh, without a meaning ; yet indignation came, and again she rose to leave the room.

“You go not yet, young lady,” and his fierce look imposed obedience ; “be wise, be cautioned ;” he continued, “become Clancarron’s wife, accept my offers, or listen, and tremble at your doom.”

“I listen then,” said she, with scorn, while the dignified pride of a superior soul beamed in her beautiful eyes ; “I listen, fearlessly listen ; but, dark man, I tremble not ; no, I disdain your menaces, as I defy your power, and, unappalled, wait for your prophetic voice to disclose this threatened doom ; but ere you speak, hear me ; rather than stoop to be the abject wife of one most abject, rather than owe an obligation to one the noble spirit holds more abject still,

I would voluntarily sink, if possible, beneath the wretched thing you do infer your power can make me ; I will ever be superior ; condition cannot move, cannot reach the virtuous mind. Jane De Dunstanville will ever be herself."

A fury, difficult to be restrained, suffused the stern visage of Don Diego with a dark and fiery hue ; his eyes seemed blighting meteors, and his swollen lip as it grew white with internal anguish, quivered without uttering a word.

He who had accompanied him, and had hitherto held silence, perceiving that rage for a time suspended his speech, addressed the agitated heiress.

His tones were croaking as the raven's when boding ill ; his dialect, coarse and provincial, declared him unpolished by education, and his demeanour and terms

displaying a pettifogger's knowledge of our laws ; he announced himself solicitor to his noble friend.

“ Sir Geoffry De Dunstanville,” said he, “ had an elder brother.”

Jane perfectly remembered having heard her grandfather mention Maximilian ; but she spoke not.

The solicitor went on ; “ he died in Portugal ; fell in a duel ; but some months previous to his death, he had married a young lady from a convent during her noviciate : his interest with the English ambassador gave him unbounded influence with his chaplain, and he married them according to the rites of the Protestant Church. Not many days after he fell, and the timid, trembling, fugitive widow ; helpless, alone, without money, and without friends, and apprehensive of

being taken, made a virtue of necessity, and threw herself into her parents' arms, beseeching mercy. They were great and had power ; she had not been professed, and after a certain time she was restored to her convent ; to bribe them to silence and concealment, her fortune was doubled, and in process of time she became a nun ; but not before she had given existence to the legal heir of De Dunstanville.

To enrich and aggrandize the eldest, according to the custom of the country, Matilda had been sacrificed ; and fearing reprehension themselves, and the severity of the Inquisition to her, they bribed high, and all was suppressed, till a little time since, when Matilda, on her death bed, disclosed to her son, who had been bred for the cowl by her still indig-

nant parents and family, that he was the undoubted heir of De Dunstanville.

Under the assumed name of Don Diego d'Almeyda, he arrived in England, to investigate his pretensions, and assert his claims; and on minute examination of the title deeds in the Commons, he finds only in failure of the male line the female can inherit. Be now advised, dear Miss De Dunstanville; reflect and retract, for in him you have so haughtily repulsed, whose friendship you so proudly reject, and whose power you so vainly defy, you behold your cousin, and by right of primogeniture, Sir Geoffrey De Dunstanville's indisputable and unalienable heir."

Jane sat the pale image of uncomplaining despair; her sweet eye was fixed meaningless upon them; a preying chill had deadened the beautiful glow of her cheek;

her ruby lips grew white, and sickening thoughts were gathering about her heart, and communicating wild fears to her brain, when she was roused from her stupor by Don Diego's rude approach.

In fierce and impatient accents he demanded her final answer—"The moment for decision is come," he added.

"The moment *is* come," said Jane, firm in herself, rising above him, and even above her own feelings; "it is come," she repeated, "and I have decided; to your justice, Don Diego, I make no appeal, a British jury will award it; to your mercy, I could not be obliged; your soul never knew the softening impulse; to your power and consequence, whether arrogated and self-created or not, I am compelled in the present moment to submit."

The solicitor interposed—"My clerks

attend below, Madam, and I am legally authorized to affix proper seals on every thing; the Abbey of De Dunstanville is already in our possession, and all bonds, bills, and monies, are arrested in the bankers and steward's hands, until the Lord Chancellor's decree be known. In consideration of the parties, more than my own interest, I could wish the matter amicably adjusted; we have proofs that my client is the undoubted heir, yet, as you, Madam, were born and bred to the expectation, by commuting, and acceding something, much anxiety and expense, and exposure and delay, might be spared. I have often arbitrated these matters; it is a deed of mercy."

"Justice," said Jane, with firmness, "neither accedes nor commutes; she holds the balance with an even hand, and on this

occasion I expect not your vaunted mercy to turn the beam in my favour; if your pleasure, gentlemen, be now signified, I would be alone."

The kind solicitor bowed—"we are in possession of the house and effects, but till to-morrow morning, we would act liberally — till to-morrow, I say, madam, you and your servants may remain."

Jane arose with dignity; her eye emitted a cold scorn; "I will not burden Don Diego's liberality."

A small miniature of Sir Geoffry happened to lay on her work table; the chain had broken, and she was attaching it to another, when interrupted by her visitors. She took it in her hand, and she encountered the fond, endearing, well-remembered glance of his paternal eye; it looked from heaven upon her helplessness; she

felt the hallowed influence, and it sustained her trembling spirit ; she pressed the unconscious image to her lips, to her bosom.

“ My grandfather ! I am your Jane De Dunstanville ! ”—she said no more.

Don Diego gnawed his nether lip ; his looks darted rage, and an envenomed rancour seemed ruffling every dark lineament of his repellent face.

“ Madam ! ” he cried, his tones inspiring a sensation *once* felt before, “ you repel all mercy, and by braving the power that can undo you, steel every nerve, harden every sense, and work the stirring spirits of my blood, till a bolt forms that must crush you.

“ Your orders, or letters addressed to the care of my friend and solicitor, Mr. Flarehomme, in Bishop’s Place, will be in-

stantly forwarded to me, and have attention."

Jane vouchsafed no notice of his menace, but in calm and dignified silence, quitted a presence baleful to every feeling of her upright soul.

Who he might be, or what his claims, she had not considered; but on leaving the room, she involuntarily threw her eyes down the well stair-case, and beheld several mean, ill-looking fellows in the hall, as if taking inventories.

She flew to Mrs. Moreland's apartments; she had not returned, but there stood poor Dinah, pale and weeping.

"Oh! madam, what!—what!" respect suspended the rest; but a kind interest in all that concerned her benefactress, had forced from her grateful heart, the agonized "what!—what!"

“What!—what! indeed,” replied Jane, “alas! Dinah, I know not what; but all in this late happy and innocent mansion is such horror and confusion, that I must quit it, and I have no De Dunstanville, no beloved dairy cot to shelter me——but—I have heaven, yes heaven, and I have ——” Here she burst into a violent passion of salutary tears, which, in some degree, composed the swelling anguish of her heart, for with the sheltering heaven, the dear idea of Fitz Ormond’s cottage blended, and she felt that in that retreat, his bosom would be paradise, and his guardian tenderness a defence from wrongs and persecutions.

She flew to the writing-table, and in trepidation uncontrollable, she wrote

To Hildebrande Fitz Ormond.

“I expected you, dear, dear Fitz Or-

mond, my heart expected you, yet you came not ; no, you came not ; my spirit is very faint, my brain very confused, and my bosom throbs ;—sad and wild are its throbs my Fitz Ormond. In your cottage Mary will be calm ;—in your bosom she will be at peace ; lose not a moment—hasten then to sooth and support your own Mary, and never let either again think on Jane De Dunstanville.”

A mild and holy hope now diffused itself through her mind, and its balmy influence quieted the tumult of agonized thoughts ; she felt more collected, self collected, and ringing the bell for a servant to take Fitz Ormond’s note, she occupied the moments till Mrs. Moreland’s return, with giving orders to Dinah to pack up her clothes, for neither jewels, plate, nor valuables, would the people in

possession permit her to touch, even had she desired it.

Calm and resigned, she was removing her papers from her writing table, the interior appurtenances of which being of solid gold, constituted it a valuable ; and, consequently, a prohibited article, when Mrs. Moreland made her appearance.

She had found Lady Ellen anxious and dispirited, not having heard either of, or from Dillon for some time, and in that gloom of reflection, too deep for the rays of hope to penetrate, she alighted at the gates of the heiress.

CHAPTER VI.

THE sad vicissitudes of Mrs. Moreland's life had made her no stranger to the unfeeling and merciless procedure of what is falsely denominated justice, in the abodes of distress and want; instantly, therefore, she understood the business that was going on when she entered the hall, though that it should be acting *there* was an enigma her reasoning faculties could in no way solve; with her heart therefore, throbbing with the blended emotions of horror and consternation, she asked the meaning of what she beheld.

“ It means,” said the old Scottish steward, “ it means ——”

But the attached Caledonian, who had grown grey in the family, could add no more ; he ran off as fast as age, infirmities, and anguish, would allow him.

The females were running about in tears, and wringing their hands ; the men, some in stupified confusion, and others yielding to violence, abuse, and invective ; the expression of the whole group varied, yet all increased the distracting commotion, till the lower regions, so late the portrait of regularity and hospitable economy, were converted into a rude and undistinguishable chaos.

Self and self-interested objects were instantly forgotten by the sympathizing heart of Mrs. Moreland, she threw one wild and melancholy glance over the scene, and with trembling limbs staggered, rather than walked to Jane's *boudoir*,

when, commanding her feelings, and affecting composure, she took the pale, yet calm Jane in her arms, crying, "My angel friend, what means this strange and hurried confusion?"

Jane tried to smile through her tears.

"Nothing, dear, dear Mrs. Moreland, Mary has still her Fitz Ormond, still has his love, and his cottage, and ——— but Jane has nothing for him, nothing now to offer *him*."

Her voice was low and plaintive, but she continued, wiping her tears, "An heir has risen from the grave; from the shades of oblivion has risen and claims every thing; the son of Sir Geoffry's elder brother claims all; Don Diego is that son, is that heir, and I am a beggar, Jane De Dunstanville is a beggar."

She raised her lovely eyes to the face of

her friend ; their beam was dim, and her checkburned, "*should I* give him a beggar ? Oh, Mrs. Moreland, Mrs. Moreland, only this morning so gay, so great, so happy ; now—the retrospect is fearful, reason shakes, and nature cannot bear it long, but you will not leave me, no you will not leave me ?”

“Leave you, my beloved girl, I will never leave you,” said she ; some dark confederacy has combined to deprive you of your hereditary rights, but fear nothing, bear the storm greatly ; innocence must triumph, and they will be involved in the depths of ignominy and disgrace their vileness deserves. Don Diego, a foreigner, your grandfather’s nephew and heir !”

“So he announces himself,” said Jane faintly, “and with the power of such he

arrogates, commands, and acts ; every thing is sealed and seized in his name, and years must elapse before any decision can be expected, for all is thrown into Chancery, at least so Mr. Flarehomme, Don Diego's solicitor, informed me."

" Merciful God !" exclaimed Mrs. Moreland, sinking into a seat, and a deathly paleness stealing over her features, while a strange terror gleamed in her eye—" you almost blight my senses ; whom did you name ? tell me, tell me, but do not say Flarehomme, for the very sound bodes treachery and ruin ; he is fitted for deeds of darkness, calamity follows his baleful steps, and withering despair is his work. Nay, droop not, Miss De-Dunstanville, but let it cheer your dejected heart, to hear that the respectable would never have employed him ; he never *could* have

been chosen to assert a just or an honourable claim." But as matter of fact can better elucidate character, than even comment from the wrung heart, while Jane and Mrs. Moreland are preparing to take their farewell of Portman Square, the finger of truth shall nought set down in malice, but simply a sad, sad tale, deliver and delineate, the striking traits that mostly distinguish Don Diego's upright solicitor, both in private and professional life.

Mr. Flarehomme was of mean birth, and low obscure breeding; education he had very little, and of talent still less; his nature was dark, subtle, cruel, and betraying; and if there wanted another vice to fill up the measure of human depravity, it was ingratitude, and that he possessed in so

super-eminent a degree, that all the others compared with it seemed virtues in him.

Early in life, by means which honesty would shrink from, and honor disdain, he gathered up some perishable dross, and with this he erected a fabrick of professional reputation, which encouraged the unwary and desperate to employ him, and the needy to associate with him.

His wife was alternately the victim of his tyranny, his meanness, and his caprice; the ill-fated being has been known to borrow money for household expenses, nay necessities, because the proud Attorney must be able to boast, he always keeps five hundred pounds at his bankers; in his care she lost her health, her happiness, and at one time nearly her reason; she was ge-

nerally considered mild and inoffensive, but of her head she could never boast much, and her heart had been so long in her husband's keeping, that she could not boast much of that either.

According to the annals of a strong building, fatal to the culprit, he once evinced such superiority of skill, in the manufacture of a last testament, that he had very nearly reached a point of elevation which gives an uneasy sensation to the neck ; but the old arch one, who seldom forsakes his adherents till quite fitted for his own gloomy territories, helped him to creep out at one of the many loopholes which the honest and honourable never sought, and therefore never found in the devious windings of the profession.

A man, in whom there never was found

guile, who had been a friend to the friendless, and a father to the orphan, a stranger to Mr. Flarehomme's *real* character, and real principles, became his friend and intimate; under a rude and coarse exterior, he believed there were virtues, because he himself was a stranger to vice; and under the holy guise of friendship, he betrayed this man's family to want, and himself to ruin and to death.

This lawyer had guaranteed payments for a certain mercantile house, whose law business produced him considerable annual profits; he knew its credit expiring, he knew it sinking to bankruptcy; yet, with satanic and remorseless heart, he exerted every influence with this guileless man, and induced him to place his whole property in this falling firm, assuring him,

it would recover its consequence, and produce him ample independence.

The sums he had guaranteed for the house were paid ; all were paid, but the friend, the father, the husband sunk the unupbraiding victim ; persecuted, poor, sick, and forsaken, torn, tortured, and undone ; meekly he bowed his head, forgave his murderer, and expired.

Man of sin ! man of an hard heart ! bethink thee, before the distance between thy spirit and pardon be immeasurable ; before thy doom be irreversibly fixed, bethink thee well ; when thy spark of life is burning dim and feeble ; when the night is gathering about thee, that has no to-morrow ; when the reprobating voice of conscience cries, in thy harrowed ear, the name of the destroyed one ; when

his pale injured form glares on thy fading sight, when thy shivering spirit shakes on the verge of that dark gulph, yawning to inclose thee, for a long—long—for ever; ere then, bethink thee, what will then be thy condition! thou canst not then deceive another, thou canst not then deceive thyself; stern, recollected truths will strike thine affrighted spirit, piercing remorse, gnawing horrors, stinging tortures, all will crowd upon the fearful moment, upon thy fearful soul; every groan of aching agony now bursting from the widow's wrung heart; every bitter tear from the desolate orphan's languid eye, is adding to thy drear load, and will press upon thy shrinking soul; and, then, an angry God will tell the what thou art.

Man of sin! that awful moment is approaching; it must, it will come; bend.

then thy iron heart; bend thy stubborn
knee; make atonement while thou canst,
and let not redeeming mercy have died for
thee in vain.

CHAPTER VII.

To know and to feel what was right, and to put it in practice, was one and the same thing with Jane De Dunstanville; and considering Lady Clancarron's family, as relatives, had some claim to her deference, though little pretension to her regard, she dispatched a note to the Countess, requesting the favour of an immediate interview, to consult on a subject not more unpleasant than unexpected and extraordinary; Jane, also, hoped to learn from her Ladyship on what grounds Don Diego's claims were founded; therefore, she awaited her answer with some degree of impatience.

Lady Clancarron's answer.

“The Countess Clancarron's compliments to Miss De Dunstanville; she has been apprized of the occurrence to which she alludes, but, being occupied in attending to important family arrangements, is prevented waiting on her.”

Jane was unacquainted with the dark side of human nature, and her pure heart was a stranger to that species, of friendship, “which follows wealth and fame, but leaves the wretch to weep.”

It was, therefore, with a sensation bordering on pain, that she handed the card to Mrs. Moreland, asking her in a voice tremulous from dejection of spirit, “what it could mean?”

“It means, my dear simple child, that Jane De Dunstanville, the courted heiress with twenty thousand pounds a year, and

Jane De Dunstanville, the oppressed and depressed child of misfortune, are two distinct personages in Lady Clancarron's estimation; added to that, remember, Don Diego is the lover of Lady Florence, which unites them in one interest."

Very providentially our poor heroine had a fifty pound note by her, which would answer for present expenses, and that with her wardrobe, her grandfather's miniature, the stranger's locket, and a likeness of Fitz Ormond, included her whole worldly possessions, and with these relics of greatness and felicity, behold her with sweetness in her looks, and quietness in her manner, the occupant of furnished apartments in the house of Dinah's widowed sister; she had parted from her domestics with tears on her side, and blessings on theirs, with execrations mingling with

these blessings on her oppressors. Old Malcolm Campbell would not quit her ; he had nursed her in a cradle, and only the coffin should separate them. Sir Geof-fry's servants always had enough to live on when they were grey-headed ; and, therefore, he wanted nothing but to be near his young Lady.

Dinah, the gratefully attached Dinah was now her only attendant, and always disputed with her sister in watching her looks and anticipating her wishes.

In the very bloom of youth, beauty, and hope, she was now deprived of wealth, rank, power, and patronage, with all the distinctions so gratifying to the young and glowing heart ; yet Jane felt one pang severer than them all, one sting had sharper venom, it reached her heart's core, and

there it rankled till the aching senses nearly maddened.

Her letter to Fitz Ormond, and such a letter, was unanswered, unnoticed ; it had been left with his valet ; he had received it, he had read it, the people said, and immediately discharging his lodgings and valet, in an agitation of spirits, and irritation of temper they had never witnessed before, without having left one order or direction as to letters or messages, he hastily quitted the house.

This strange mysterious conduct gave a cruel disappointment to her every softer hope ; her warm and vivid imagination had portrayed the pure and peaceful felicity of an earthly paradise in Fitz Ormond's humble secluded cottage ; she anticipated it as that dear possession of the innocent heart which passeth shew, and

when she quitted her splendid mansion, the sweet idea arose on imagination, and diffused a brightening ray over the heavy gloom which involved her perspective of felicity.

“ Oh ! Mrs. Moreland, Mrs. Moreland ! ” she cried, when the account of Fitz Ormond’s sudden disappearance was related ; “ the suspensive dread I feel ; this ignorance of his fate, this uncertainty of his meaning, added to all the rest, will destroy me ; it shakes my reason already, and my brain is bursting ; my fate is now indeed insupportable, my anguish intense.”

Tears streamed from her aching eyes, while cold shudderings of foreboding evil deadened her heart, and gave an ashy hue to her cheek ; “ This desolates my bosom more than all ; his heart was my wealth,

his worth my world, my own fatal follies have lost him, and I am now lost myself."

Too true it was, that poor Jane suffered more real anguish, and gnawing regret in Fitz Ormond's strange disappearance and silence, than from all her other deprivations; and it was under this depression, and a total abandonment of hope, which almost extended to despondency, that she experienced the balm of consolation and support from the sense and regulated sensibility of Mrs. Moreland; she at once soothed and sustained her, and by rational and tender arguments, moderated the impetuous feelings of a nature which had only known the enervating luxuries of unlimited indulgence.

Mrs. Moreland was well calculated for the gentle offices and tender endearing intimacies, and in her nature was the

happy art of blending instruction with the soothing of hope, and she was at once the active friend and gentle monitress. "Yield not, my beneficent child, yield not," said she, "to such impetuous feelings; repress them, my superior Jane, and rise above a dejection unworthy of your sense and character; if indulged, they will extinguish every mental energy, and pervert every ennobling principle; your soul is unsullied, you have never wrecked the peace of conscience, and have nothing to fear; gracious eyes watch over you; and meek submission, to the seemingly afflictive hand, will secure your claim to that peace which goodness bosoms ever, and which the world can neither give, nor take away.

"I reason not, my child, with the cold calm of a heart fenced round with felicity from feeling; no, I have felt every keener

pang of human calamity ; all but one possession has been wrecked, and that one is brighter and more beauteous than a diadem, for its lustre will irradiate the immortal spirit—an unupbraiding conscience. Away, then, my Jane, with every desponding thought, and let us always remember, that in the glare of pleasure, evil may be impending, and in the gloom of adversity, that joy may be approaching ; you are humbled, my child, but not degraded ; some cruel confederacy has combined to oppress and wrong you, and for a time you must submit to vexation, anxiety, and deprivation, and should Don Diego really prove the heir, rest satisfied, the only daughter of such a house, will be splendidly portioned, and surely the elegant mind of Jane can feel happy with competence ; you can gladden and endear an

innocent circle of love, have the approving smiles of the good, and the favour of God. Your most frowning evil, the darkest page of your strange history, will soon elucidate itself. Satisfied of Fitz Ormond's affection, an affection that stood the test of united rank and fortune with a Jane De Dunstanville, what have you to fear? To suppose him unworthy, would be a severe censure on your own judgment; — we know not but fate is now adding something to those wrappings of mystery which you so long delighted to wear, therefore, we will hope, that in some hour not far off, but bright and unexpected, a happy development will dispel every cloud, and restore you to each other."

Jane resigned and softened, if not altogether convinced by her friend's reasoning, felt her wilder passions more com-

posed, and sinking meekly on her knees before Mrs. Moreland, with her beautiful eyes glittering mildly in their humid orbs, raised to her face, their spirits mingled, she felt her friend's ideas transfused into her own heart, and after some few moments passed in the soft luxury of mutual endearment, nature felt giving way, they yielded to the heavy influence of sleep, and lost the recollection of sorrow in a transient slumber.

Jane and Mrs. Moreland had been some days the inhabitants of their humble residence, and had so apportioned their time, that each hour had its occupation, and not only excluded languor, but also the bitterness of reflection; their mornings now were really mornings. And they had one day retired from their frugal dinner at the hour of four, when Dinah, with looks of

astonishment, and a disgust which respect could not conceal, announced a most unexpected, and not a most welcome visitor to Miss De Dunstanville.

It was the Countess of Clancarron ; her ladyship entered with more than her usual boldness of demeanour, and threw a well-understood glance around an apartment she knew very ill-suited, and very different to Jane's condition, then with a bending which spoke the warm heart at a distance, she seated herself. She threw a rude examining look over the figure of Jane ; it was the look of a little soul anxious to appear great, that meekness might feel mortified by inferiority ; but the mind of Jane De Dunstanville was innately great, and a modest dignity imparted graces to her figure, while innocence sat beaming on her open brow.

Of Mrs. Moreland the Countess did not deign the slightest notice ; but saying with an imperious *hauteur*, she desired a private audience without interruption from any uninterested, Mrs. Moreland arose, and with the quiet scorn her ladyship had inspired, was quitting the room, but Jane stopped her, “ My dear Mrs. Moreland stay ; Lady Clancarron’s exception cannot extend, or include you ;—who is more warmly interested in my fate than you ? ”

Lady Clancarron’s eyes darted malignant fire ; the glare passed over Mrs. Moreland’s face, but it reached not one feeling ; pressing, therefore, Jane’s hand tenderly, she was re-seated.

“ I am not to day to learn the deference in which my wishes and opinions are held by Miss De Dunstanville,” said the coun-

tess ; “ yet your present opposition, madam, shall not interfere with the purpose of my visit.”

Jane bowed and waited in silence, and her Ladyship resumed.

“ Had you acted with the consistency of character expected from, and becoming the heiress of De Dunstanville, many of your present distresses, and much of your humiliation would have been spared you.”

Jane looked up, but was calm. “ You had now been the Countess of Clancarron, with rank, distinction, and happiness.”

“ For the distresses, madam, which providence permits,” replied Jane, “ his mercy will sustain ; humiliation I feel not, for fate cannot reduce the greatness of a virtuous mind, nor humble the pride of integrity.”

“ Very appropriate indeed, for a sentimental comedy, Miss.

“ I feel it, madam, appropriate to a virtuous spirit, under the pressure of wrongs and injustice.”

“ Well, Miss, you may carry your romance as far as suits you ; my commission is from Don Diego, or I ought rather to say, Sir Diego De Dunstanville, for such he really is, and from Lord Clancarron, and your answer will be awfully decisive of your future destiny ; it will either restore you to the sphere in which you have moved, or degrade you to a state so abject, that your mind cannot imagine it.”

Jane assured her of perfect attention.

Lord Clancarron loves you still ; so warm is his passion, that even your bitter scorn has not been able to chill its ar-

dor ; your grandfather's heir loves, to dotage loves, Lady Florence ; he will, then, Miss De Dunstanville,—now profit by the smile fortune assumes ; accept the blessing the moment offers, and avert the coming tempest which must wreck your every hope for ever,—on condition you marry Lord Clancarron, Don Diego will drop proceedings ; indeed, the lingering delays of law, suit not his impatient and ardent passions ; he will, I say, withdraw his claims, and allow an equal division of property, landed and personal ; if you reject this proof of love and friendship, you know your fate, abide its horrors if you can.”

“ Your Ladyship has been so perfectly explicit, and circumstantial,” replied Jane, that you demand a reply, equally unreserved and explanatory ; once before you had my undisguised sentiments on the

subject of marriage with Lord Clancarron, yet thus importuned, I feel constrained to make a repetition ; you, madam, may deem my decisions ill-timed pride, I consider them well-timed propriety ; the hand I rejected in prosperity, I reject still ; the heart I valued in prosperity, I value still ; and it will value me in rags." A soft sigh of remembrance passed the lips of Jane, but she continued,

"The rank which titles confer is worthless, in my estimation ; the superior soul, and upright mind, that can suffer, but never stoop to meanness, that can perish, but never know the foulness of dishonour, these, Lady Clancarron, are the distinctions which have my reverence, and in their unfading glory, in the midst of poverty, I can be great. My heart decidedly and finally rejects Lord Clancarron ; nothing

can level my mind to his; no suffering compel, no terror could intimidate me to become his wife; a love, pure and holy as that of angels, from infancy, has warmed my bosom; a dying grandfather's sacred voice sanctioned that love, and my heart will cherish the beloved being till death hath chilled its latest throb—then, and for ever, oh Fitz Ormond, my Fitz Ormond, Jane is your own!”

“Gracious God! Fitz Ormond!” exclaimed Lady Clancarron, a rolling tide of fears rushing through her brain, “Fitz Ormond! you love Fitz Ormond?”

“I live but in the thought of him; I am his affianced wife, and more proud and blessed in that dear title, than if empires called me sovereign. Such be my answer to Lord Clancarron. To Don Diego your ladyship may reply, that if he be my

grandfather's heir, *my justice* would not accept so large a portion of *his* property ; if he be not, he has no right to make the offer ; knowing my own claims, I sit secure, and will patiently abide the decision of a British jury."

" It is well," said Lady Clancarron, rising, and affecting composure with an ill-dissembled smile, " it is well ;" yet she felt it not well, for fears to which she durst not give expression were gnawing at her heart ; yet she added, " hereafter you will rue the proud repulse a false security emboldens you to make."

" Never, madam, can I rue a perseverance in that I consider right?" Jane calmly arose, and to her ladyship's haughty bow, returned a dignified courtesy, and ringing the bell for Dinah to order her

ladyship's footman, the Countess departed, even more dissatisfied than she came.

No sooner was the door closed on the countess, than the fortitude and spirit which had supported Jane in her insulting presence gave way, and she yielded to the most violent and uncontrollable feelings; Mrs. Moreland was alarmed for her senses, and knowing that soothing rather strengthened, than repressed hysterical affections, she spoke with a severity which, as it surprised, moderated the storm among her passions, yet she spoke, and with anger. "I am persecuted by all," she cried in bitterness of soul, "I am forsaken, betrayed, censured, even by those I have loved and served. I am poor and degraded, what have I to do with life?"

"My dear Miss Dunstanville," said her friend mildly, "could your persecutors

behold you now in these your moments of weakness, and they are the only moments of humiliation, how great would be their triumph! Your sufferings are severe, yet yielding to violence adds to their severity, and takes from you a greater blessing than any you have lost, self-command — ”

“ And do you reproach me, Mrs. Moreland, you whom — ”

Jane ceased, for the unuttered thought even rendered her unworthy. Mrs. Moreland continued to gaze on her still angry and agitated features; her heart tenderly pitied her, and secretly mourned that the early blights of sorrow had so chilled and embittered a nature so full of sweetness and beneficence; the zephyrs of prosperity no longer attempered her feelings; but a brooding canker generated in the

witherings of blighted pleasure, diffused an ungenial influence, and Jane felt its venom gnawing her heart. Mrs. Moreland's looks, and a tear which fell from her eye, reached that cankering worm, melted the frozen drop, and Jane's asperity of temper gave way ; she threw herself on the bosom of her friend, crying, " You—you, ever so gentle and kind—you I have reproached."

" To me, my dearest girl, you were ever kind and beneficent," said Mrs. Moreland, " and that you made me so happy, should now be a sweetening drop in your own bitter cup ; only, my love, be patient, it is presented to your lip by a wise and gracious hand, for purposes we cannot penetrate ; its ingredients are salutary to our soul, yet we ourselves may convert them to consuming poison ; we, my child, infuse discontent, restless impatience, bitter

anger, cruel resentment, and many other blighting and burning passions, till the rectifying cup, designed by providence to strengthen us, and lead us to ultimate felicity and perfection, is by our own sad alchemy, converted to venom so subtle and deadly in its quality, that its operations cease not till the imperishable spirit is corrupted and undone.

CHAPTER VIII.

ON the eventful evening in which iniquity accomplished poor Fitz Ormond's ruin, his valet had been waiting in the hall to attend him home, as was his usual custom; and when he beheld the master he loved brought down stairs pale and motionless, astonishment and terror had nearly rendered the honest fellow as insensible as himself; he stood as if transfixed, when one of the numerous footmen, who were looking on, commiserating both master and man, ordered a hackney coach, and assisted both into it; air and motion restored the senses of the valet, and by the time they

reached home, he was enabled to attend Fitz Ormond, who one moment would rave in all the wild wailings of delirious agony, and the next, burst into peals of loud unmeaning laughter, and then sink into gloomy and silent stupefaction.

Tomkins, his valet, alarmed, and trembling for the safety of a master most deservedly loved and honoured, called in medical aid, and it was the physician's declared opinion, that the alternate stupor and delirium was produced either by excessive inebriation, or some pernicious drug, which, by incorporating with his blood, had at once inflamed the senses, and benumbed the active principles of life. Youth, however, with a fine uninjured constitution, and the assistance of stimulants judiciously administered, at length counteracted the mischievous effects of the

baleful juice, which premeditated treachery, for the vilest purposes, had infused into his wine.

During an intellectual ray, while he had the power of collecting ideas, and recollecting past circumstances, he desired Tomkins to bring him materials for writing, when in the following letter he demanded the two thousand pounds for which Lord Clancarron was his debtor—

“MY LORD,

“It would be an unnecessary and obtrusive information indeed, to say *how*, and *when*, and *where*, the hand of dishonor was raised against my life, my reason, and my property; the latter having fallen a sacrifice takes all value from one, and only quickens the sense of torture in the other; yet as the imperishable principle within,

pleads for preservation, to preserve it without injury to, or imposition on my fellow beings, I decisively demand repayment of the two-thousand pounds, which in hours of confidence I felt so gratified in lending your Lordship.

“The bearer has orders to return your note, and give any other receipt you may deem necessary.

“I am, my Lord,

“Your Lordship’s,

&c. &c. &c.

“H. FITZ ORMOND.”

His gloomy fits of abstraction were becoming shorter and less frequent; and during the absence of his valet, who was his messenger to Lord Clancarron, he occupied himself in perusing some letters, left for him during the days of his extreme indisposition.

The first two were from his Tailor and Coachmaker, who, according to his orders, had inclosed their respective accounts.

He next broke the seal of one, whose characters and name were unrecognized.

“Major De Lamaine, has the honor to remind Mr. Fitz Ormond of la petite bagatelle, (one thousand pounds) which he lost to the *Doidrum*, at Clancarron House. The major can easily accept illness for Mr. Fitz Ormond’s silence on the subject, but now will feel obliged by his notice.”

Fitz Ormond had not forgotten, he opened another.

“Sir Dennis O’Braddy presents compliments to Mr. Fitz Ormond, he has called at his lodgings *twice*, and as he does not like shilly shally, if he will not remember, or what is the same to Dennis O’Braddy, eh if will not *do* the genteel thing, and pay

two thousand pounds, which he lost at Clancarron House, why a word is enough, and Sir Dennis has two pretty creatures very quick in their errands, and that always do their business properly ; they are rather noisy to be sure, but then the same person is seldom disturbed a second time. An answer will oblige Mr. Fitz Ormond's servant to command. Sir Dennis is no flincher."

Fitz Ormond almost smiled, but he laid it quietly aside, and took up another ; memory was now quickened to torture, dreadful recollections rushed through his brain, and they lodged in his heart ; the latter shook in his weakened hand, and notwithstanding the gloomy burning of his brain, a thrill of ecstacy pervaded every vein, and his beating bosom swelled to sudden rapture. It was from Mary ; it

contained her tender, yet agitated request to hasten to her ; it contained the acceptance of his hand, of his protecting love, of his cottage ; it was the offer of herself.

What then were poor Fitz Ormond's sensations ! what he did feel, he could feel no longer, no more, for the intenseness of agony had reach a point where reason's guiding ray was lost ; and when his valet returned, he found him with distended mouth, and a fixed glazed eye, cold, stiffened and insensible, grasping the fatal letter.

The transient suspension of Fitz Ormond's mental faculties, probably saved his reason ; it was gracious, for after a few hours incoherent wandering, recollection, calm and terrible, returned, and he stretched out his hand for Lord Clancar-

ron's answer ; it was now become his last hope, but alas ! poor Fitz Ormond ! " the spider's fine attenuated web is cable to it."

Mournfully, poor Tomkins laid it on the table before him, and respectfully retired to some distance while he perused it.

Lord Clancarron's answer.

" Strike me ugly, but your letter Fitz is cursedly comical--beats cock-fighting, d--n me ; cash up at present does not suit--Falcon is bang-up-- off--taken in the knowing ones--in for it too---done me over too---prime to the bone though ; that's your sort---dash.

" Your's,

" CLANCARRON."

The scenes of iniquity, the deep treachery, all now, when too late, stood unveiled, and he knew himself--he knew

Mary the victim of premeditated villainy.

Adversity has been known to call forth the energies of a noble mind, and, had not poor Fitz Ormond's complicated distresses involved the fate of one more precious than the vital drops circling round his agonised heart, it had only inspired him to deeds of bold exertion; but she had claimed his protection, claimed his hand, his heart, his cottage,---and in the moment when he found himself betrayed, robbed, and ruined; he now felt himself the most low of all beings, for even hope could not reach him; its faint beam had lingered in his bosom till the savage reply from Lord Clancarron's hand extinguished the sickly ray, and left his aching heart the desolated abode of wasting despair and gnawing anguish.

At a humble distance his poor valet had continued to silently watch his motions, when, in that indescribable calm which gives evidence of some stern determinate resolve, he took his purse and pocket-book from his desk, and emptied the contents on the table before him.

“Tomkins.”

The valet flew, and the honest warmth of his heart gave an earnestness to his eye.

“My good-fellow you have served me faithfully, and *deserve* what a ruined master cannot do.---We must part.---This very hour we must part.---No remonstrance, you know me obstinate---absolute in my commands---it—”

Poor Fitz Ormond paused, for emotion would have betrayed an unbidden tear.

He resumed, "we shall meet again, perhaps we may meet again, my good-fellow; but if not, be to others what you have been to me, and you will find I hope ---a Fitz Ormond in your future master without his failings, and without his misfortunes. This is your's," he continued, giving him some notes.

Tomkins knew his master, and attempted not refusal, but he burst into tears.

"Cheer up my lad," said Fitz Ormond, faintly smiling, "you must still do me a service --"

Tomkins did cheer up---"You must, indeed, do me a kindness, and then you will give me your address,--and then, Tomkins--"

"You will give me your direction, Sir."

"I have none myself."

“Your cottage, Sir,” and —— Tomkins dropt on his knees fearful, he had said too much. He had, indeed, for the dreadful recollection that the cottage and Mary too were lost, his happiness and his home, both lost, was too overwhelming; he shrieked, “distraction! it should have been the holy abode of Mary; her bosom---would it enshrine a---villain---her hand—no it shall not clasp--no---her eye-beam would blast me, her soft voice strike me as the bolt of justice; sweet, ruined saint, you shall mourn Fitz Ormond dead, but never---never---know him dishonoured.”

The storm of feverish feeling was again kindling, yet the fibres of his heart felt cold and hardening; his blood curdled, his pulses throbbed, and only the fiery brain felt burning.

“And is it so *hard* to be honest,” said

he, sternly strong in his proud resolve, and taking up a pen to sign the checks ; “ so difficult to be just, to pay the forfeit of a crime that well deserves perdition—and it is perdition !—Mary it is thine, and mine—Aye, thy perdition, my lovely lost one.”

Again his senses were hanging on the whirl of horror ; again the wildness of delirium was seizing him ; but he suddenly grew calm ; the chilling torpor, the feebleness of inanity returned, and lest recollection should again leave him, he inclosed the sums he had lost to Lord Clancarron’s honourable friends, Sir Dennis O’Braddy, and Major Delamain, and before the evening closed,—there is sometimes honour among thieves,—the Countess and her son had two thousand five hundred pounds of the spoil in their pos-

session, and Fitz Ormond himself was left a beggar.

The strong tumult of feeling, the burning conflict of passions were sinking into a deadening calm, and with the sensation of the wrecked mariner, who beholds his treasure buried in the remorseless deep, did Fitz Ormond look back on his days of smiling hope and pleasure. Poor, helpless, and undone, he now stood in the peopled universe ; he had filled the innocent being that loved him with disappointment and anguish, and his guilt and folly had exposed her youth and loveliness, to the unpitying blights of a world, he knew to be cruel and betraying ; yet, if possible, he determined to rise superior to the bitterness of fate, emerge from his misery, and be actively useful. He nobly resolved either to live or die by the

sword ; the world was in arms, and to perish while his country wanted defence, was meanly abject, but before he encountered the perils of a soldier's destiny, he resolved once more to hear the soothing voice, see the sweet smile, and feel the enchantment of Mary's touch ; it would sooth his soul to peace, and inspire feelings pure and holy as her own, to sustain his spirit during the dangers of war—her pure tear, her holy prayer, would soften remembrance, “ and Jane De Dunstanville,” he cried, continuing his reverie, “ she was ever kind, gentle, and generous ; she will listen to the prayer of Fitz Ormond. and shelter and cherish the angel whose helpless I will repose on her bosom—Mary will then be safe—Jane will be gratified, and Fitz Ormond—he will be far off—and nothing.”

Full of his design, yet with a palpitating heart, he went to Miss De Dunstanville's, in Portman Square ; already anticipation was busy ; in idea he felt the soft pressure of Mary's hand, beheld the looks of woe from her angel eye ; she was with the noble rejected Jane, he was at their feet acknowledging every thing, admiring, loving, blessing both, and before the sweet enchantment of his thoughts could be broken, he had reached the mansion so lately occupied by the heiress.

CHAPTER IX.

THE knocks Fitz Ormond gave were low and tremulous, but the door was instantly opened; and had the gulph beneath yawned and disclosed its gloomy horrors and disorder, it could not have inspired a greater consternation and dismay than the scene which met his petrified sight; the hall-chairs on which appeared the De Dunstanville arms, were some broken and others covered with filth; the porter's comfortable chair was in tatters; and a rose wood table stood in the midst, on which were scattered egg-shells, pieces of fried bacon, porter pots, shattered glasses,

bottles, tobacco pipes, and several packs of dirty cards ; all seemed to commingle in disgusting confusion, portraying a scene more appropriate to a cellar in St. Giles's than the hall of a splendid residence in Portman Square.

On two chairs lay extended in drowsiness and filth, a fellow of coarse and severe aspect ; while another with dark austere visage and folded arms, walked about the hall, as bearing authority ; his unmoved hat nearly hid his scowling brows, and as the horror-struck Fitz Ormond drew near him, in a rude and vulgar dialect, he vociferated.

“ Where the h—ll beest thee, Tummus ?
Coom, an answer, wool thee ? ”

Tummus had been the under groom, and was retained by Don Diego to attend the horses till the auction should take

place ; and as this *officer of justice* reiterated his authoritative command to *coom*, he made his appearance, and with uncouth obeisance, and hesitating voice, begged pardon for being asleep ; “but them here gemmen having friends with them, they had kept i: up a little late for certain ; but he never negligented his stable for all that.”

His apologies allowed Fitz Ormond a moment to recover breath, and he could speak.

“Am I—” said he, agitation still giving difficulty to speech,—“Is this Miss De Dunstanville’s house?”

“Aye sure tees, sure maister.” “Can her elegant mind allow such riot and disorder?” thought Fitz Ormond.

“Is she at home, friend?”

“Noa,” interrupted the groom, “she

has na a huom, not her ; the *layers*, dom em all, from toe to topin, she has na sa guod a ane as she geed her beastesses, the wor for she."

Fitz Ormond staggered,—did he hear! was he mad!—"Miss De Dunstanville."

"I dinna knaw aboot her na'am; be like the law ha taen it wi a her other geer."

"Miss De Dunstanville!" he repeated, and his tongue was cleaving to his parched mouth;—the name of Mary, of Miss Fortrose, quivered on his ashy lip; but he could not articulate, and while he rested against the arch, leading to the inner hall, lost in the bitterness of wild and complicated thought, a decent kind of woman descended the stairs, and with a modest courtesy was passing on, when Fitz Ormond suddenly stopped her, and collect-

ing as well as he could his scattered senses, he cried, "Stay, dear woman, in mercy stay; and in pity to a friend of Miss De Dunstanville explain—account for this strange and horrid disorder, which every where meets and blasts my senses; where is Miss De Dunstanville?"

In a few words the maid explained the whole mystery, and informed him of Don Diego's claims to the title and estates; and in terms of feeling and regret, above her humble station, described the mortifying and forlorn circumstances in which her beloved and noble mistress had been driven from a mansion which her goodness and gentleness had made almost a heaven.

"Generous, injured Jane! dear and revered benefactress," he cried, all her remembered benefits and kindnesses rush-

ing on memory ; “ where, where shall I seek thee. Oh, that my life could purchase thee a paradise ! there should gratitude enshrine and watch, and worship thy virtues ! tell me,” and in the glow of disinterested sentiment, he pressed the woman’s hand, “ direct me to her residence and———and———”

Fitz Ormond’s voice faltered ; and a deeper suffusion burned on his cheek, while he added, “ and Mary—that is, I mean Miss Fortrose, she is with her !”

“ Miss Fortrose ? no Sir, only Mrs. Moreland is with her ; my dear lady has no friends now but her ; and, indeed, she is her comfort, and friend, and every thing.”

“ Gracious God ! what say you ? not with her ! then inform me where she is, where she went, when she was here.”

“ Sir,” said the woman, “ I never heard of her name, never saw her ; her name is not on my Lady’s list.”

“ Not know her, not on her list ! merciful powers, sorrow bewilders you, she lived with Miss De Dunstanville, was in her dearest confidence, in her very heart.”

“ Indeed, indeed, no Sir,” replied she, her looks and accents expressing the kindest pity ; “ none of that name ever visited here”

“ Mary ! Mary !” he cried, sickening terrors creeping through his chilled blood, and mounting to his brain with maddening horror, “ Mary ! mysterious, lost Mary, thy Fitz Ormond is—”

The uncouth figure stretched on the chairs started from his drowsy posture, and with keen and eager eye rushed for-

ward, crying, "who spoke of Fitz Ormond? where is he?"

"I —— I ——"

His lip grew white, his eye glared, and he staggered unconsciously towards the door. "Ah, my lad of wax, not so fast," cried the man, "if so be as your name is Fitz Ormond---d---n me, but this is prime, as the peers *says*."

Fitz Ormond's arms were seized—his feelings approached to frenzy—he struggled violently, but the ruffians surrounded him—the words, "Mary—Jane---" were faintly uttered, and---he was still.

CHAPTER X.

DILLON MORELAND had been for some time the inmate of a prison, and, though enduring the extremest anguish and anxiety respecting his mother and family, so stern and unbending had his nature become, that, though want and every deprivation were added to his mental sufferings, he could not be induced to inform his doting mother of his condition ;---Dillon had to learn that confession of error may soften the heart, but never degrade the mind.

With secret distress Rupert Butler beheld the fine constitution and mental faculties of his friend fast sinking to decay ; he

was often lost in gloomy abstraction, nor could all his efforts inspire him with hope or a wish to live; and under these circumstances the amiable youth considered himself justified in acquainting his mother with her son's condition.

Rupert Butler's letter to Mrs. Moreland.

“ You, dear madam, have known my nature too long, my principles too well, to suspect I would break the sacred bond of confidence formed by the soul between man and man, unless circumstances, strong and well digested, warranted the *apparent* violation. What the decided character of Dillon's mind may deem the infraction, my ardent desire for his preservation sets upon a hazard.

“ You either endure apprehension for his safety; or imagine him engaged in

pursuits where he is not ; his life, and perhaps his reason, press on the softest, and most vulnerable fibres of my heart, and force my tongue to acknowledge, that with a painful and proud pleasure, I have long been the companion of his bitter and *imprisoned* hours ; you know the disdain with which he spurns pecuniary obligation ; you know with what unbending pride he would suffer want, and even death, rather than avow transgression, or obtrude his miseries on those who may have a right to reproach.

“ *You*, dear Mrs. Moreland, know this, and *I know you* ; the spirit bending beneath the consciousness of offence, may be spared *avowed* penitence ; the gentle of heart will feel the irrepressive sigh before respired, and prevent the painful tear ere it burns the manly cheek.

“A mother’s voice will now be music to his ear; the soft beam of a mother’s eye will warm his heart, and a mother’s hand will give assuasive balm to every angry wound the world inflicts; maternal fondness will temper severity, and repress all bitterness, and the spirit now harsh, stern, and cold, will be wooed to love itself, and love its kind again.

“The public prints announce you the guest of Miss De Dunstanville; she has wealth and power to extend the sphere of beneficence,—but, forgive my freedom.

“May the day, madam, soon dawn that beholds you with your own again, diffusing the cheerful blessings so congenial to your heart, and may I be allowed to join the social circle around your hospitable fireside, when not one link will be broken.

“ You know my address, and most anxiously I shall expect your attention to this.

“ Believe me, Madam,

“ Affectionately your’s,

“ RUPERT BUTLER.”

Such was the letter Rupert Butler had conveyed to Portman-square, but, as it unfortunately happened to be sent a very few days after Miss De Dunstanville was driven from her home, it yet remains to be known whether it was lost amidst the sad confusion which prevailed in that mansion, or like many others, was suppressed for dark and secret purposes, by the emissaries who were ordered to be perpetually on the watch, to intercept all letters and messages, and carefully to enquire the business of any strangers who might call; and by these precautionary

orders, the letter never reached a mother whose hours were wasting in aching apprehensions for the uncertain fate of a beloved son.

Poor Rupert's last hope had now proved abortive, and he viewed the fevered cheek and languid eye of his friend with a sigh of bitterness ; he beheld him in the bloom of youth, withering beneath the blights of poverty and self-neglect. Every enquiry for Mrs. Moreland, proved ineffectual, and he felt that it was only a mother that could alleviate Dillon's condition.

Strange arraigning thoughts rushed through the mind of Rupert, and his lip offered comfort which he himself could not taste ; his brain engendered notions, dark, confused, distracted, and unconsoling ; yet, he was good, and his virtues great, but they were blossoms wanting a genial sun

o improve and ripen them for that superior state of existence where their bloom would be eternal, and where the intellectual spark will brighten in the regions of progressive glory.

“ Oh! great creative power, of whom we nothing know, but that thou art, and that *thou art*, the knowledge shrouds itself beyond the depths of sense; why this waste of human intellect, of human joy? what need of dark disorder, of consuming woe, to mar the fairest works of this grand world?”

Here with Rupert Butler reason dropt finite light, and all grew dim; mortal her eye can never see the stream of glory that warms the christian's soul in hours of trial—the finitude of thought, without the eye of faith, could rise no higher.

“ ——— The Every where,
He is not inaccessible ; learn then, oh doubting soul !
He displays his hidden things in part,
And part conceals ; trying alike,
With what he hides, and what reveals ——”

Poor Patty, too, the humble, contrite Patty, was wearing away to the land of forgetfulness ; her grateful spirit, meek and unupbraiding, watched and waked for Dillon ; she remembered not, that by participating, she deepened his enormity ; she only remembered, only beheld the being who had raised her perishing frame from the cold stones, and warmed it in his own bosom. So dangerous are the beguilings of passion in a young heart, that vices are almost refined into imaginary virtues.

Were Dillon cold and indifferent, Patty felt her crime, and secretly vowed to become virtuous ; did Dillon smile, and

speak kindly, good resolutions faded, and Patty was again a sinner.

It was during one of Dillon's chilling fits when his eye looked reproach, which his tongue did not utter, and when the witherings of decay undermining her vital strength, communicated to affrighted conscience an alarm of hereafter, that Patty, in deepening penitence, formed a resolution which led to circumstances strange and unexpected.

Dillon had been rather better that morning, and his attentive friend having brought him some interesting poetry, she went forth from the prison, and while he beguiled the heavy hours of his languor by perusing the following lines, poor Patty's unusual absence was unheeded till the evening.

I.

“ Ah me, the roar of war is past,
But mingling with its dying hum;
Perchance—forbid it heaven ! his last,
A murdered lover’s groan may come.

II.

“ My parent’s foe has triumphed—else,
I might not tremble thus alone ;
The while his banner held the field,
My hero’s youthful arm had one.

III.

“ Oh ! might my senses drink unseen,
The breathings of his love again,
His bosom might my fading cheek,
And sinking head once more sustain.

IV.

“ My heart should rest in sweet content,
Nor wish yon silver orb to stray,
But all unconscious linger there,
For ever on her lovely way.

V.

“ The pleading eye was raised to heaven,
Yet oft a glance like suffering saint,
Awaiting hope, askance she cast,
As gently rose the meek complaint.

VI.

“ That maiden’s eye was raised to heaven,
But ah ! her heart, with feeling fraught,
Alive to human hopes and fears,
Acutely thrilled in earthly thought.

VII.

“ Beneath her spread a lovely scene,
As e’er was trac’d on autumn’s eve,
By spirits who the web of bliss,
From threads of chasten’d feeling weave.

VIII.

“ Yet ah ! it had no charms for her,
Through bursting tears but dimly seen,
Or as the forms of those she lov’d
Would oft on fancy intervene.

IX.

The daughter of a warrior lord
His pride of birth all unreveal’d,
He gave her to her early love,
The youth who bravest fought the field.

X.

“ And this the day ! but yet remain’d
Unsolemnized the nuptial rite,
When rung the warder’s war-note rude,
That called his chieftain’s bands to fight.

XI.

" Her love-warm cheeks like parting day
When fades its light on mountain brow,
To darkening shades of unthought grief
Resigned its fervid rapture glow.

XII.

" But yet aside, in struggling pride,
The big and burning tear she flung ;
As on her mailed hero's form,
In silent agony she hung.

XIII.

" But they must part, how dearly then,
She traced each feature o'er and o'er,
While, God ! the thought was on her mind ;
But they perchance might meet no more.

XIV.

" Oh ! what an anguish this for love,
But when he was indeed afar,
How dimly lit her darkened mind,
The gleam of hope's half-setting star.

XV.

" The parting kiss and warm embrace,
Alone repell'd the chilly air,
As on the fight, closed in the night,
And found that love-lorn maiden there.

XVI.

“ For she had heard the battle’s blast,
And listen’d to its dying hum ;
And trembled lest perchance his last,
A murder’d lover’s groan might come.

XVII.

“ But not in fight her hero fell,
Nor had he failed a lover’s truth,
’Tis he ! he comes with passion’s speed,
But wherefore thus alone the youth ?

XVIII.

Discolour’d thus, and battle stained,
The plume from off his helmet rent ;
And with such speed so wounded sore,
And near with toil and torture spent.

XIX.

“ And that sad look ! oh with me, love,
Away to some more sure retreat ;
The foe is near, thy father’s friends
Are slain, or scatter’d in defeat.

XX.

“ He bore her from the terrace high,
An Hermit’s stilly sacred cell,
Long overgrown with tangled brier,
Was in the lone and woodland dell.”

XXI.

“ And scarcely had its entrance thrown,
A verdant robe of safety o'er 'em,
When rung the triumph shout around,
And all was flitting blaze before 'em.”

XXII.

“ He leant him on his battle blade,
His brain was throbbing 'gainst his hand,
Like angel newly fallen he seem'd,
In agony of pain to stand.”

XXIII.

“ Yes, maiden, 'twas a draught of woe,
But worse than thou hast yet sustain'd ;
Affections wreck, and passions curse
Within the bitter cup remain'd.

XXIV.

“ To *other* dangers couldst thou turn
And seek relief in *other* fear ;
'Twere sad ! but thou the less wouldst heed
The accents that arrest thy ear.

XXV.

“ While yet, beloved, on yonder tower,
Waves high the foe his flaming brand ;
I must not stay, or where he thence,
You might not clasp a sullied hand.

XXVI.

“ Yet, e'er my fated head has clos'd
A shade no sun of love may share ;
For ah ! that sun's last waving beam
Is set for ever in despair.

XXVII.

“ His honour should the warrior's soul
Like hermit dreams of piety,
Illumine brightest when the hour
Of inward strife and death is nigh.”

XXVIII

“ But I ! how lost ! when warriors fell,
And dyed the spot they would not yield
With martyr blood ; nor deigned to quit
In hapless fight the foeman's field ;

XXIX.

“ I fled to thee ; yet could have died
When fail'd thy father's nerveless hand ;
I *could* have died, but thou wert then,
Abandoned to a ruffian band.

XXX.

“ Oh, God ! that thought ! but thou art safe,
I'll think no more of honours gone ;
And will believe all treasures lost,
Repair'd by this one object won.

XXXI.

“ And might that hour again return,
So lovely art thou, so ador'd ;
I would not reck my heart's reproach,
But plunge in deeper stains my sword.

XXXII.

“ For, what would I not sacrifice
Of all that once was dear to me ;
My *very love*, that highest price,
Should buy one moment's joy to thee.

XXXIII.

“ But I no more, in dreams of bliss,
May press thine angel lip to mine ;
Or sully, with a tainted kiss,
A breath so sweet, so pure as thine.

XXXIV.

“ For still the foe's triumphant yell,
As he pursued my rescreant flight.
On blooming hope its baneful spell
Would cast a wasting with'ring blight.

XXXV.

“ In dreams of night, when love had breath'd,
Perfumes to lull thy sense to rest ;
A voice might pierce thy sleeping ear,
And waken torments in thy breast.

XXXVI.

For would thy father's spirit rest,
While in mine arms his daughter lay ;
And on that traitorous bosom slept,
That once had shunn'd the battle's fray ?

XXXVII.

“ Or, when the moon-lit path we trod,
And tranquil as the scene we saw ;
Should passion's pulse no longer beat,
Its swell subside in deep'ning awe ?

XXXVIII.

“ For me to curb my throbbing heart,
And swallow down my stifled groan ;
To see yon lovely moon pursue
Its way ; and think, ‘ just thus it shone.’

XXXIX.

“ Could'st thou, enthusiast as thou art,
In unmixed rapture linger there ;
And know that it recalled a pang,
A bitter pang I *durst* not share ?

XL .

“ I dare not think that one so lov'd
Should e'er become a wretch like me,
And bare this fever-heated heart ;
It must not, God ! it must not be !

XLI.

“ Then ah forget that e’er we lov’d,
’Twas but a Summer’s painted cloud,
And in the sun shine of thy life
In loveliest hues a moment glowed.

XLII.

“ And memory shall not grieve to be
So early of its shade bereft,
Nor breathe one sorrow-sigh to see
The heavenly circlet it has left.

XLIII.

“ And yet in some hereafter hour,
When peace within thy heart is glowing,
Methinks my spirit would rejoice
To know a tear for *me* was flowing.

XLIV.

“ For ever I could linger here,
But dangerous thoughts await my stay,
That thou may’st feel no added pain,
Or prove *my* grief, I must away.

XLV.

“ Oh then the maiden’s thoughts awoke,
For all like some sad dream it seem’d,
She held him, touched his pallid cheek,
And then she knew, she had not dream’d.

XLVI.

“ An untold gush of inward heat,
Repress'd the lab'ring power to speak,
A dimness gather'd o'er her sight ;
But not a tear was on her cheek.

XLVII.

“ Yet still she clung to him and hope ;—
In frantic passion's wild embrace,
He gazed in fondness unrestrained
Upon that pale beseeching face.

XLVIII.

“ And then perhaps had conscience failed,
And love its destined course had taken ;
But ah ! by death's cold hand the form
That never shook before—was shaken.

XLIX.

“ Forgotten wounds in flight received,
Mid passion's struggling throes unheeded
Had paled his cheek, and life had fast
As flowed the crimson stream receded.

L.

“ Unseen had flowed that heart's dear blood,
Till fainting from its loss he fell,
And o'er the maiden's soul there came
His low, his ling'ring *last* 'farewell.'

LI.

For her were being then so lorn
That spirits who had watched apart,
With gladness hailed the throb that spoke
The bursting of a broken heart.

CHAPTER X.

THE gentleman with whom Alfred Moreland studied the first principles of common law, had been engaged to defend Miss De Dunstanville's claims ; he was a person of high professional knowledge, and unimpeachable integrity and character ; he had retained the first counsel, and, with indefatigable attention, had subpœnaed the proper witnesses, with every other necessary preparation for the trial, and never ceased to soothe and sustain his fair client with expectations, which he believed he should soon realize.

Some old letters and papers of Sir

Geoffry's being wanted, which Jane knew were in an ebony box in Portman Square, the proper forms being gone through to obtain them, Dinah having left some part of her wardrobe in the closet where this box stood, requested permission to accompany the people deputed to bring them; but, to the poor girl's mortification, she was rudely denied admission, and dropping a few tears, as she turned from the closing door, the faint shriek of a poor famished being struck on her ear, and penetrated her heart.

The wretched creature raised an imploring hand, as Dinah thought, for charity, when, in the dim uplifted eye, which had once shone mildly bright, in a cheek, which had once blushed with the rose's bloom, and in the shrinking frame, which had once given innocent delight to a

parent's heart, Dinah, with shivering horror, recognized a fallen, unhappy, dying, sister !—It was Dillon Moreland's penitent Patty.

When she quitted the prison, it was her resolution to seek the commiserating bosom of her virtuous sisters, shed the atoning tear, obtain their forgiveness, and die. From many a secret enquiry her affection had led her to make, she knew her sister Dinah was with Miss De Dunstanville. She had always been her favourite, and her she first sought ; the savages of the hall had turned her from the door with gross and vulgar abuse, and her trembling steps were taking another direction, when Providence kindly sent her sister's arms for her refuge.

Patty was feeling the approaches of death, and it was her prayer to have both

her sisters' soft forgiving kiss, before wasting disease laid her in the dust, and gave her spirit to the world's great judge.

Salutations in the market place ill suits hearts sinking with sadness, or swelling with strong emotion, yet the fond sisters flew into each other's arms, and, regardless of what the passer by might think, sobbed convulsively on each other's neck.

With enfeebled steps, one from sorrow, and the other from sickness and sorrow, they slowly tottered to a coach, and, by the time they reached their widowed sister's home, Patty felt more peaceful within, and Dinah more satisfied than if she had recovered her wardrobe.

For the first morning during a lingering lapse of time, Patty awoke from a composing slumber; her head had rested beneath the peaceful dome of virtue; sleep

had, in some degree, renovated the decaying springs of life, and she felt a holy and unusual calm pervading her desolated bosom; her eyes shone with that lucid and peculiar brightness which indicates the spirit breaking from its earthy mansion, and while one cheek was flushed with the rich hectic of decline, a tint, fainter than the maiden blush, tinged the other, and gave pale boding of a rapid departure.

“How soft and sweet was my last night’s sleep,” said she, fondly leaning on the breast of her widowed sister, Mrs. Norman. “Oh, Dinah,” addressing the other, “*you* can never know how soft a pillow the bosom of virtue is to the aching head of penitence, you can never feel how balmy the tear of pity is, when dropping on a contrite sinner, because you are innocent. Oh, dear, dear Dillon,” she

continued, raising her lean hands, "oh, had you the softening balm, your Patty would smile in death!"

"Whom did you name?" hastily, and in agitation, interrupted Dinah, for well she knew Mrs. Moreland's anxiety for *her Dillon*.

"One I so love," returned the sighing Patty; "but my love is unholy, it contaminates purity, and envenoms peace; but a pardoning drop from *his* mother's eye would soften a spirit once kind and gentle as an angel, though now hard and angry; he has a friend, and *such a friend!* but, oh, the pity, he has not the balm himself which Dillon wants, and that we shall all want when we die"

"Speak of living, dearest Patty," said Dinah, weeping; "if your Dillon be Dillon Moreland, he will soon have the

balmy drop you wish, sweeter than your own ; take comfort, you are under the roof with his mother, his mild, mourning mother."

" Oh, fearful ! fearful !" cried Patty, a wild and momentary fire sparkling in her eyes, while every feature grew pale and agitated ; " Where is she ? where am *I* ? Am I so near her ? Is she so near me ? So near ! so near —— "

" Oh, be calm and composed, my Patty, Mrs. Moreland is merciful."

" Yes, I know," she cried, rapidly speaking, " only wickedness never pardons weakness, but ——" and her eye glared fearfully towards the door, as if afraid of some one entering, " and—but do not, do not tell her, not yet—not yet—oh, I am wicked, very, very wicked——" and here she seemed to sink into deep and gloomy

abstraction ; the sisters assisted her to lay down on the bed, and she was left alone.

Patty thought not now of repose ; her brain was beating, every throbbing pulse was aching, and all within was wild commotion ; she started from the bed, and fell on her knees, respired some prayer, but uttered nothing ; she held a book she had been reading ; it was “ Addison’s Evidence of Christianity.” “ I will not part with *this* ;”—but Patty, while the fashion, had been fashionable ; no pocket was ready ; pressing it, therefore, to her lips, as a sudden hope gave momentary warmth to her heart, with uplifted eyes, she spread it open on her bosom, and covered it with her shawl.

Dinah was attending her lady’s tea-table, and Mrs. Norman was putting her infants to bed ; and during these moments, too

opportune for the wild purpose, Patty's weakness was forgotten ; apprehension supplied the place of strength, and, with a step light and swift as the nimble foot of health, she darted down stairs, quietly unclosed the door, and rushed with wildness through the streets.

Dillon Moreland had been so interested with the beautiful simplicity of the poem he had been reading, that the gloom of evening set in around him, before he began to think of his poor companion's unusual absence ; but, when he did think, horrors came with the thought. Alarm for her safety, and torture, lest his distresses, wants, and unkindnesses, should have hurried her into deeper and darker enormity, struck his bosom with a new pang ; she had been the unrepining companion of his wretched hours ; the meek, obedient

servant of his wishes, and she had inspired a sentiment, which, though neither partaking of the hallowed purity of love, nor the dignity of esteem, the vicious never felt it, and the virtuous need not to have disclaimed it. Sorrow had rendered it a chastened feeling, and in Dillon's milder reflective moments, it was a wish to reward Patty, by enabling her to retire from the scorning looks of the severe and untried virtuous, and pass a life of innocence in some society that could appreciate the virtues of her nature, and drop an obli-viating veil over her early errors.

She had now become so necessary to Dillon's convenience, and even to his sight, that when the evening altogether closed, and the doors for the night were shut, and when he heard the wind blow in gusts, and the rain falling in torrents, his

mind became a chaos of maddening ideas. The tempest, if exposed to its beating fury, would shiver her poor wasted frame to nothing ; and yet, terrible as was that thought, it was exceeded by a complicated fear, that she might have taken refuge in haunts of deeper impurity.

The doors were closed, she could not gain admission even if she came, and Dillon, in agony, threw himself on the bare ground, and when his natural impetuosity had exhausted itself, without taking the refreshment which even his humble pallet would have afforded, in starting and uneasy slumbers, he wore away the feverish night, and rising with the break of day, a cold, solitary, cheerless apartment did not contribute to elevate his depressed spirits, or compose his agitated feelings.

The hearts which have throbbed with the anguish of uncertainty, which have endured the suspensive pang, may judge how Dillon passed the day ; apprehension almost heightened to frenzy ; and perhaps in the hours of hilarity and happiness, he never experienced a more exquisite start of pleasure, than when the poor trembling worn-out creature, broke upon his sight.

A sensation of delight to which he had long been a stranger, darted through his frame, and shone in his languid eyes, and as she appeared, he flew to meet her.

“ My poor trembling truant,” he cried, taking the shivering penitent in his arms—“ where have you been wandering ? why so agitated ? you have not——” and the honourable soul of Dillon shuddered from the horrid thought that crossed his brain. “ Patty where have you been ? *you*

would not Patty hurry me to death, you would not *drive* me down perdition's most d——d, precipice —— girl —— girl—— where have you been?"

And Dillon looked fearful, in his fear "want is bitter, but abject pollution, Patty do you understand?"

Full well did Patty understand the implication; it was torture, yet she smiled, and the smile would have looked lovely, even on the lip of purity, for it arose from the thought of her *last* innocent night, and the innocent beings who watched her during that night.

The hectic flush rekindled in her ashy cheek, and in the moment she felt superior to guilt as she replied—"I deserve such fears; I am a sinner, but Dillon, my last night was pure and peaceful!"—She took

his trembling hand, and pressed it to her own burning brow, then to her beating bosom.

“No sin, Dillon, no sin could come where I was; your mother reposed beneath the same roof; for one whole night, even, I found refuge within the holy sphere of her virtue.”

“My mother—my mother!” he repeated, and involuntarily he dropt the hand he had held, “I remember my mother.” Dillon did remember her, and remorse, and grief, and shame, all blended with the remembrance, and his proud heart felt bursting.

“Did you hear her speak, did you see her, Patty?” And as he spoke he spread his hand over his face to hide the gushing tears.

“Ah! no Dillon, when I knew it was her home, your mother’s home, like a

sinner among angels, I shivered, and shrunk from the purity my heart adored; I could not stay near your mother; I fled like the poor wretch I feel; I fled to die here—to die with you, Dillon; my sins help to crush me, but *you* will not curse me.—I am dying, Dillon—you will not curse me—my heart blesses; and loves *you*.”

“Patty,” he cried, softened to the tenderest pity, “I bless you, will always bless you, and though I feel the bitterness my mother *felt*, now feel the groan she often groaned, feel that a mother’s sighs have a voice that reaches heaven, yet, oh! she is—she is—my mother.”

“She will bless you Dillon,—*me*!—”
“You look pale, and are cold, my Patty, lie down, and I will watch you—be calm,

you will be happy yet—happy if Dillon can make you so.”

Patty did look pale indeed, every feature was more wan than before ; she grew very sick ; a misty darkness seemed dimming her sight, and a faintness was at her heart.

The affrighted Dillon supported her in his arms ; he laid his hand upon her bosom ; her heart beat low and languid ; she leaned her sinking head back on his neck, one weak convulsive groan was heard ; he clasped her still closer, he felt the cold pressure of her fingers giving way ; she raised one ashy wasted hand to pray, to pray for Dillon, but the voice was hushed, the last commotion over, and Patty’s penitent soul was among angels.

Dillon continued to clasp the poor unconscious thing in his arms; every cold or unkind word he had ever dealt her, rose on memory with torture, and gave the dark stab of remorse, the unavailing pang of what could never be recalled. The angry feelings, the stormy passions, they all sunk to rest, only the aching of memory remained feeding the spark of inextinguishable regret.

The door of Dillon's chamber was suddenly burst open; he started, looked up, and by the gleaming embers of the fire, which threw a shadowy light over the room, Dillon beheld his mother.

A confusion of thought, a tumult of feelings, all wild and tender, overwhelmed him; his poor burden dropped from his nerveless arms, he sunk on his knees, and received from his mother's softened

eye, that healing balm for which the dead Patty had prayed, and from her lips that pardoning blessing, which she herself had gone to God to obtain.

Dinah had made terrible confusion at Miss De Dunstanville's tea table ; the ladies were both reading, and ordered her to make the tea ; but her thoughts were absent ; her heart with the dying Patty ; she poured the cream into the sugar, and the water over the toast ; and to complete her blunders, in handing a cup of coffee to Mrs. Moreland, she let it fall into her lap.

Jane started up, " What bewilders you, Dinah ? Are you asleep ? "

Dinah's emotion had reached its climax, she burst into tears, and falling on her knees, cried, " Forgive me ! forgive me ! my sister—my sister Patty ! oh, madam, "

and she wrung Mrs. Moreland's hands, "indeed, indeed, she is penitent, she is dying——and——and——Mr. Moreland, that is, your son, I mean ——"

A wild alarm seized Mrs. Moreland, she started up, "What mean you Dinah? What can you mean?"

"Patty—Mr. Dillon ——"

"Oh God, speak! What of Dillon Moreland? where is he?"

Dinah was still on her knees, she spread her hands before her face; it was an effort to hide the burning blush of shame which the vice of another raised in the pure cheek of virtue, as she cried, "my poor dying sister has lived with Mr. Dillon Moreland, she is here in this house, but oh! forgive her, forgive her! she loves him! and is dying."

"Where, where is he, Dinah?"

“ Indeed, Madam, I fear to tell you.”

“ Fear nothing, my good girl, nothing ; say but that he lives, and I will bless you, bless you all, Dinah---say but that he lives.”

“ In a prison, madam, he lives ; it is called the Fleet.”

Who, but a mother, can feel what the mother's feeling was ! one moment she gave to silent thought ; that thought found its way to heaven, and, returning, brought a ray that cheered the dark desolation of the mother's mind. She arose --

“ I will see your sister, Dinah, soothe her, and---”

Dinah waited for no more ; she flew enraptured, to Patty, with the glad tidings ; but, alas ! the voice of glad tidings was no more to cheer the ear of poor

Patty ; she had fled, her eye was closed, and her heart cold.

The rest may be imagined ; Mrs. Moreland flew as fast as Patty had done ; they who met her in the street retreated, they thought her some poor maniac escaped from her keepers, and in less than an hour the almost frantic mother beheld her first-born darling.

His hair was neglected, his dress in disorder, and his cheeks and lips like ashes ; his eyes once so serenely bright in happiness, were gloomy and sunken ; he looked the wan image of wasting despair ; he was still clasping the body of the poor dead Patty, and as his mother's pale figure broke on his tortured sight, his burden dropt from his arms, he dropt on his knees, and the mother, and the son, were blessing, and blessed in each others arms.

CHAPTER XII.

“ SWEET is the look of sorrow for offence in the heart determined to offend no more ;” said a nice delineator of nature’s softest touches.

“ My mother, my mother,” cried Dillon, heavy drops rolling down his pallied cheeks while he claspt her neck.

“ My child, my darling child, I have thee once again.”

“ But how, my mother ?”

“ Oh ! welcome, welcome any way, my dear forlorn one ; welcome any way to me, welcome, welcome, is Dillon to his mother.”

“ But what a retrospect is mine !”

“ Look no further back my child, but as it may direct you in the future ; all will be well ; I bring tidings of peace and comfort, then look not so desponding, your smile can cheer your mother, and make her forget, oh ! make her forget her worst thought, that *you* forgot her.”

“ That poor pale thing mother !” and Dillon shivered in thought, in bitter upbraiding thought.

“ Peace to her soul, and to her memory !” piously prayed the mother, “ her stormy day is closed ; it ended with a righteous deed, her penitence restored a son to his mother, and it will expiate much transgression.”

The poor remains of Patty were extended on the humble pallet on which, while living, she had shed many a bitter

midnight tear, on which her aching frame had, indeed, reclined, but where it rested not, for it was the sinner's bed, and restless.

Dillon, with slow and fearful steps drew near the body ; he even bent a knee, and raised the ashy stiffened hand to his lips.

Ah ! what thoughts were then his ! he laid his own hand on her cold and throbbless heart ; “ thy latest, warmest pulses beat for me, thou poor destroyed one ; they beat for me.”

The book still lay within her bosom ; Dillon opened it.

“ *Evidence*,” he read on.

“ And *this*, poor pale one, was thy last companion, thy last consolation ; when all failed thee this was thy consolation, and it shall be mine hereafter.”

He pressed the book to Patty's lips, then to his own, and then placed it within his bosom, bent himself over the body, as if taking leave, a long and lasting leave, and then turned to his mother ; he looked no more.

By Mrs. Moreland's orders the corpse was removed, and the rites of sepulture performed with every respect and decency that circumscribed finances would allow ; the sisters became reconciled to the loss of one who had been long lost to them, and ever felt comparative comfort in knowing she died penitent, and that the world could inflict no more.

During Dillon Moreland's fashionable career, he had allowed his expenses to much exceed his income, he had ever acted from momentary impulse—from the feverish feeling as it arose ; his deeds,

therefore, never improved on reflection, but he had to lament as much what he *had done*, as that which he had left undone.

Dillon's mother was now poor and distressed ; she could not liberate, she could not relieve her darling ; and the generous Jane, while weeping on her friend's bosom, would cry,

“ I now feel what it is to be poor.”

Still much was effected for Dillon's comfort ; to change the scene, his mother had him removed to another room, which, though much smaller, being one divided by a partition into two, it was preferable to that in which he had seen poor Patty die.

His brother Alfred now enlivened and soothed his solitary hours by affectionate attention, and relating all that was pas-

sing in the gay and busy world. His mother had a powerful balm for the wounds deepest in his heart, and in these his moments of suffering with every delicacy towards the amiable creature, related the particulars of her visit to Danglecour house, and encouraged him to hope, that the chaste and honourable affection of Lady Ellen Stirling, he yet might taste all the elegant and elevated pleasures of domestic life.

The beautiful Jane, though too visibly bending like the early lily beneath the beating tempest, suppressed her own anguish, and with the sweet complacency which so eminently graced her nature, exerted herself, and would often accompany Mrs. Moreland to see her son, and with Alfred, his friend Rupert Butler, and his mother, there were moments that

Dillon did not feel miserable. The misanthropy with which distress had been encrusting his heart was wearing off, and the more kindly feelings shed their genial warmth through his bosom ; his mind became more tranquil, his temper more moderate, and his passions more controllable ; he could listen to counsel, and was calm even under restraint ; and Jane De Dunstanville, who had an elegant taste for poetry, often made him forget he was in prison, by the interesting sweetness of her muse. And one morning that a heavy rain made all appear gloomy, Jane, Alfred, and Dillon, produced the following poetry ; Mrs. Moreland promising to be an unbiassed and impartial umpire, as to its separate claims for the meed of praise.

In the warm and grateful bosom of Dillon Moreland, there still lingered a sentiment,

which, though humanity would have blushed *not to feel*, the spirit of rectitude would have blushed deeper *to avow* in the chaste presence of modesty. Dillon's soul often gave a sigh to poor Patty's memory, yet never did that sigh pass his lips without feeling it a tacit reproach to the remembrance of the noble Ellen, and her nobler virtues. And these divided thoughts were full in his mind, when Jane, to beguile him of thought, insisted on his muse being busy, and Dillon produced the following lines :

THE COUCH OF DEATH.

I.

“ Where fled is the smile from the beautiful face,
Of love, and endearing affection the token ;
Who then but would rush to death's icy embrace,
And leave the drear spot where each tie has been
broken.

To mingle his dust with the fair one's, beneath
 The cold sod, that o'er-arches the chill couch of
 death.

II.

“ And yet, are there those who could view the sad
 scene,

Without one kindly wish for the soul at its parting,
 Without one regret for the days that had been,

But would curb the warm tribute of sorrow at
 parting ;

Nay, would twine to some newly-formed friendship
 a wreath,

From the garland that droops on the chill couch of
 death.

III.

“ But when death shall come, *love*, to rob me of
 THEE,

Thy beauty, thy truth, and thy virtues unheeding,
 I'll bend to the tyrant a suppliant knee ;

And as thou reclin'st on my bosom yet bleeding,
 Intreat him that then I may yield up my breath,
 To repose with my love on the chill couch of death.”

“ Your muse is pensive, indeed, *sombre*,

my Dillon," said the mother, with a faint smile.

"You will say mine is tingured with melancholy, too," rejoined Jane, giving some lines, with a sigh, which remembrance gave to Fitz Ormond; Mrs. Moreland read them aloud—

I.

FIRST RAYS.

"The wretch upon whose natal hour,
A spell so deadly hath prevailed,
That fain to pierce its circling power,
The sun's pervasive ray hath failed.

II.

"Who wondering hears of night and day,
As onward in their course they roll;
And feels that life must pass away,
Dark as the doubts that cloud his soul.

III.

"How sweetly on his raptured ear,
Must break that morning's living ray,
When death hath borne from darkness hence,
The sufferer to an endless day.

IV.

“ Yet e'en as sweet methinks the thrill,
That waked my feelings first to bliss ;
And all I deem that warms them still,
As pure and unrestrained as his.

V.

“ For sure, when from thy passing gaze,
The darkness of my spirit fled ;
Beloved ! its sweetest softest, rays,
Had heaven upon thy features shed.

VI.

“ Such sweetness yet is in thy smile,
I can but think a heaven is there,
Nor care I if the world the while,
Be dark in clouds, so *it* be fair.”

“ Alfred, if you are as deeply in the
dismals as Miss De Dunstanville and your
brother, I will positively decree the whole
to the flames ; I was quite *en allegro* this
morning, and you have sunk me, ye me-
lancholy mopers, into the very depths of
sadness.”

“ I have not considered my subject yet,” replied Alfred, “ for I have been watching that impertinent curl on Miss De Dunstanville’s brow; it has been tumbling in her eyes all the time she has been writing, nor could the magic of her own soft touch confine it.”

“ Take it for your subject,” interrupted his mother; “ its brightness and beauty will exclude death, darkness, and demons, from sitting on your pen.”

Alfred paused a moment, and then saying he would be an obedient boy, with a smile, wrote the following lines extempore :—

THE REBELLIOUS LOCK.

“ When forbidden to bask in thine eyes sunny sheen,
Or within its bright influence dwell,
E’en affectionate love as presumptuous had been,
Then what wonder the lock should rebel ?

“ Or once in repose on thy downy cheek bless'd,
From intrusion, oh ! could it refrain ?
Could the warm lip of love, be to thine once impress'd,
Nor languish to press it again ?

“ Then in sympathy urg'd, oh ! admit the fond plea,
And yet if too feeble to save,
Resign the dear traitor to sorrow and me,
And pity lamenting the cruel decree,
Shall mourn o'er our mutual grave.”

“ The wreath of triumph be Alfred's,”
said Mrs. Moreland ; “ for besides that his
lines display a very pretty fanciful thought,
he has diffused a ray of cheerfulness over
a scene your united deaths' heads and cross-
bones had made insupportably dull ; and
as I am no poet, I will do what many
others do,—steal a few lines I think very
appropriate to our circumstances, from the
family of Montorio, the finest romance,
written in the finest language of any ex-
tant.

* * * * *

“ We'll mock at baffled sorrow,
Nor will we seek how many a care
Must waken with the morrow.”

“ 'Tis a sweet flower, the late, late rose,
That decks the fallow autumn ;
And those the dearest beams o' joy,
That burst when least we sought 'em.”

CHAPTER XIII.

ALFRED had discovered that several of the actions on which Dillon was confined, were usurious ; and not doubting, from opinions he had received, that they might be set aside, Dillon began to welcome the hope of returning liberty ; and, could he have forgotten *one dead*, and could he have hoped he was remembered by *one living*, Dillon would have admitted the anticipations of happiness.

One day, that the weather proved very bleak and stormy, and that the evening closed with a very heavy rain, Mrs. Moreland dispatched Dinah with a note to Dillon, pleading the wetness of the night for not seeing him ; yet, promising that she and Miss De Dunstanville, would

pass the following day with him, when she hoped the result of his brother's enquiries and exertions, would throw a ray of cheerfulness over their frugal fare, and give earnest of happier hours.

The ladies then unfashionably seated themselves with the little girls at the tea-table, and, strange and gothic as it may sound on the modern ear of a fine lady, enjoyed the simple repast without one breath either of scandal or ill-nature, giving a zest to the beverage.

At the plebeian hour of eight, the little circle read prayers, and Mrs. Moreland, in the absence of Dinah, having put Lily and Belle to bed, quietly seated herself to work; while Jane, whose taste in music was exquisite, amused herself in melodizing some beautifully plaintive lines, written by the late Burns.

Jane had very early imbibed a taste for the Scottish music; her grandfather had been an enthusiast in his passion for it, and she had caught a spark which brightened in her bosom as she grew, and though she excelled in all, both on the forte piano and harp, when her soft clear tones warbled the old airs of Caledonia, every ear was enraptured.

Burns was Jane's favourite among the Scottish bards; the lines before her had never been in print, for they were addressed to his wife a few hours before he died, and found among his papers long after his decease.

She had arranged it for the piano, and its soft harmony reaching the heart of Mrs. Moreland, she intreated her to soothe the sweet melancholy she had inspired, and sing the whole as she had set it, in its original impressive words.

“ Your Scottish ear, like mine, can feel it,” said Jane, “ and oh, could I but communicate its simple beauties to the English ear, it would give some idea of Scottish harmony.”

THE LAND O' THE LEAL.

“ I'm wearing awa' Jean, like snow when it's thaw,
Jean,

I'm wearing awa' to the land o' the Leal,
There's na' sorrow there Jean, there's na' could nor
care, Jean,

The daye is aye fair, in the land o' the Leal.

Ye were aye leal and true Jean, your task's ended
now, Jean,

And I'll welcome you to the land o' the Leal,
Our bonny bairn's there Jean, she was baith guid and
fair, Jean,

And we grudged her right sair, to the land o' the
Leal.

Then dry that tearfu' ee' Jean, my soul lang's to be
free, Jean,

And angels wait on me, to the land o' the Leal,
Now fare ye weel my ain Jean, this world's care is
vain, Jean,

We'll meet and aye be fair, in the land o' the Leal.”

Jane's muse offered its tribute to the lines in the following verse.

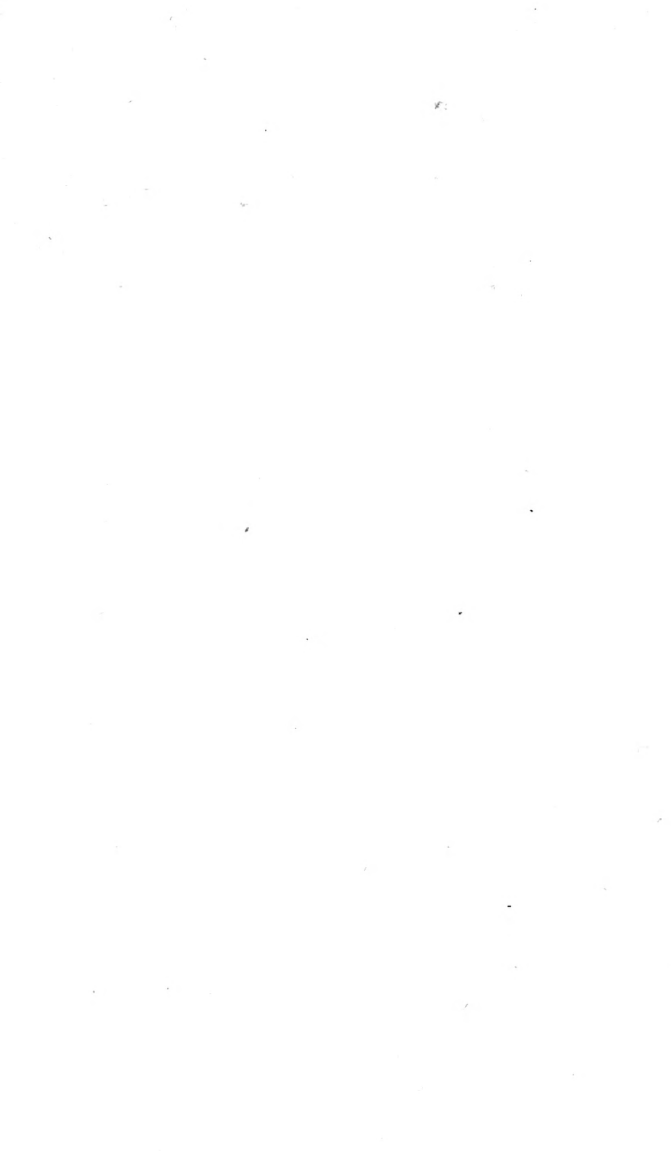
'Twas the last spark of his enchanting muse,
 'Twas the expiring ray to genius given ;
 The tuneful nine could not a wreath refuse,
 They gave it,—and his Soul went pleas'd to Heaven.

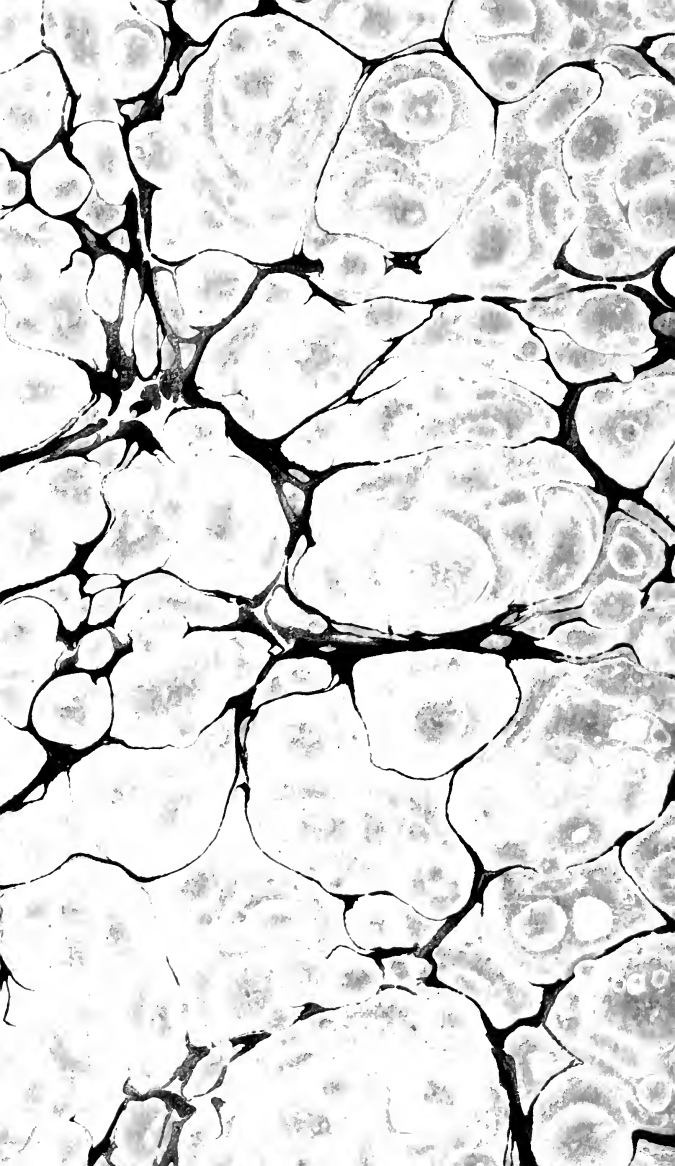
At Mrs. Moreland's request she repeated her song, and the last soft cadence of her sweet voice was lingering on her lip, when Mrs. Norman very unceremoniously announced a gentleman.

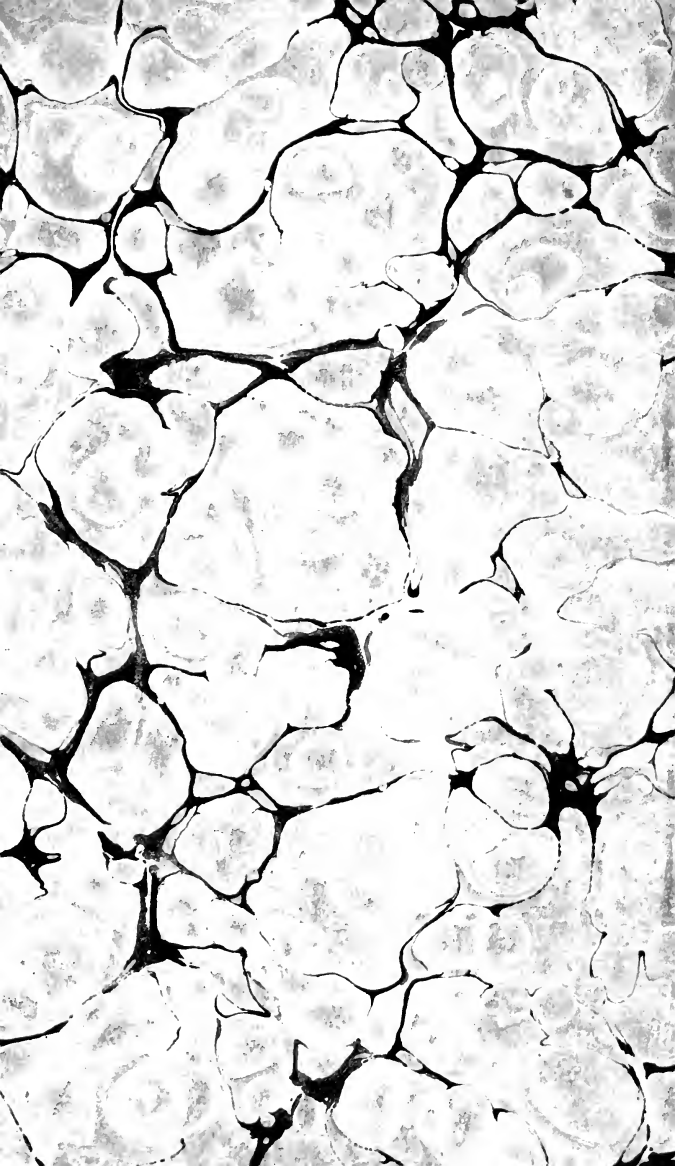
Strangers were most irksome to Jane, and she had of late been so beset, and annoyed by so many men of the law, that she almost shrunk from the human form in masculine attire ; but this gentleman would not be refused admission to her presence, and he stood before her.

Mrs. Moreland had neither knowledge nor recollection of him ; Jane dropt the music from her hand, and uttered an involuntary shriek—staggered and sunk into a chair.









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